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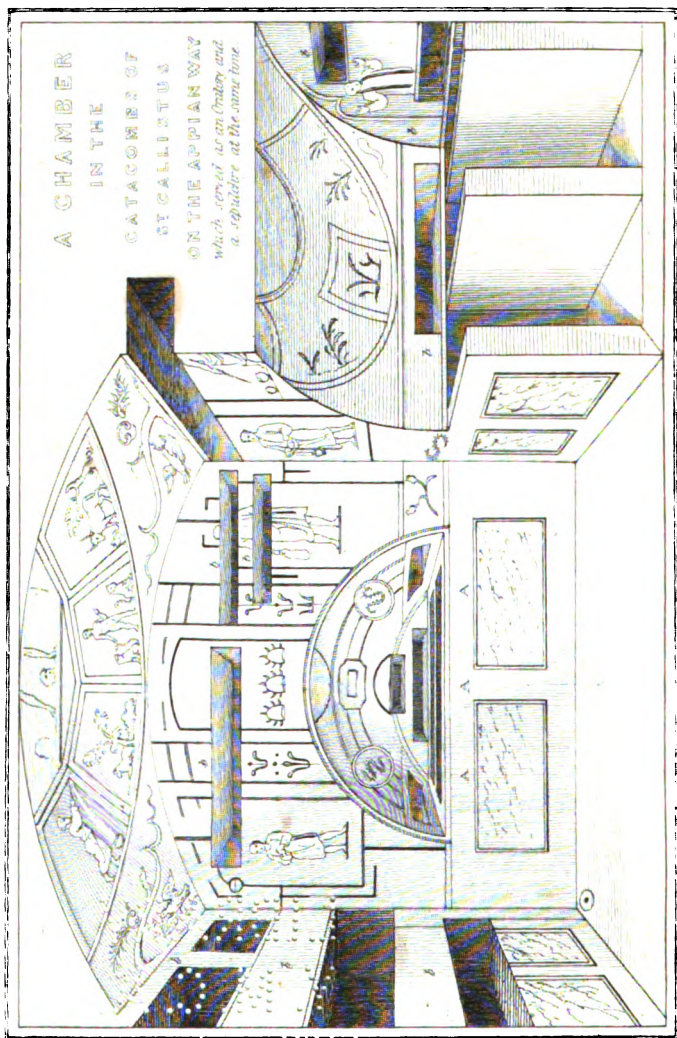








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A. A. The altar over the tomb of a Mummy  
B. B. A. Niches pierced in the walls through the floor, passages to receive the bodies of the Mummies.  
London Printed by J. Smith, Bishop's 1790 1813

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**HIERURGIA;**

OR THE

**HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS,**

WITH

**NOTES AND DISSERTATIONS**

**ELUCIDATING**

**ITS DOCTRINES AND CEREMONIES,**

AND

**NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIVE PLATES, &c.**

**IN TWO PARTS.**

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**BY DANIEL ROCK, D.D.**

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**VOL. II.**

**LONDON:**

**JOSEPH BOOKER, NEW BOND STREET.**

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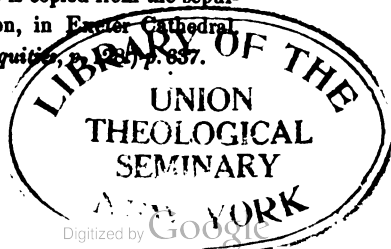
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## PART THE SECOND.

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### CHAPTER VI.

#### ON RELICS.

FROM ascertaining the doctrine of the Church upon the Invocation of Saints, we are conducted, by a natural transition, to enquire what she teaches concerning their Relics, that is to say, those existing portions of the mortal remains, and such things as once belonged to those amongst the followers of Jesus, who were saints whilst dwelling amid men, and are now in heaven in a state of glory.

#### I.—THE CATHOLIC CHURCH PAYS A RELIGIOUS RESPECT TO RELICS.

The Catholic believes that God only is the object of his worship and adoration ; yet he conceives that, without detracting any thing from that supreme homage due to the Divinity, he may manifest a becoming reverence towards the relics of the saints ; and he observes, in the language of the Council of Trent;—‘ That the bodies of holy martyrs and of others now living with Christ,

which were the members of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit, and which shall be raised by him to eternal life, and be glorified; are to be venerated by the faithful.\*

## II.—AUTHORIZED BY SCRIPTURE.

The proofs for such a doctrine are easily collected from the sacred pages. That heaven has oftentimes imparted a virtue to the relics of its faithful servants, is certain.

## III.—VIRTUE POSSESSED BY SAINTS' RELICS.

It is recorded in the fourth book of Kings;†—That when Eliseus smote the waters of Jordan with the mantle of Elias, they parted and the prophet passed over: and again;—When a dead man was let down into the sepulchre of Eliseus, no sooner did he touch the bones of the prophet than he revived, and stood upon his feet.‡ The healing virtues possessed by the garments of our

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\* Mandat sancta Synodus omnibus Episcopis, et cæteris docendi munus curamque sustinentibus, ut fideles diligenter instruant, sanctorum martyrum, et aliorum cum Christo viventium sancta corpora, quæ viva membra fuerunt Christi, (1 *Cor.* iii. et vi.) et templum Spiritus Sancti ab ipso ad æternam vitam suscitanda et glorificanda, a fidelibus, (*Hieronymus adversus Vigilantium*) veneranda esse.—*Concil. Trident.* Sess. xxv.

† 4 *Kings*, C. ii. V. 14. (Protest. Translat. 2 *Kings*.)

‡ *Ibid.* C. xiii. V. 21.

blessed Redeemer are particularly noticed :—‘ And behold a woman who was troubled with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment. For she said within herself; if I can but touch his garment, I shall be healed. But Jesus turning about and seeing her, said : Be of good heart, daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.’\* The Almighty was pleased to allow a similar efficacy not only to the garments, but even to the shadows of his delegated ministers the Apostles, for we read that ;—‘ The multitude of men and women that believed in the Lord was more increased, insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that when Peter came, his shadow, at least, might overshadow any of them and they might be delivered from their infirmities... who were all healed.’† ‘ And God wrought by the hand of Paul more than common miracles : so that even there were brought from his body to the sick, handkerchiefs and aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the wicked spirits went out of them.’‡

#### IV.—A REVERENCE FOR THEM EXEMPLIFIED BY SCRIPTURE.

The veneration which has invariably been exhibited, from the earliest ages up to the present

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\* *St. Matt. C. ix. V. 20-22.*

† *Acts, C. v. V. 14-16.*

‡ *Acts, C. xix. V. 11, 12.*

moment, by the Church to the remains or relics of the martyrs and the saints, is warranted by a variety of examples recorded in the sacred history. On going out of Egypt, Moses was careful to comply with the dying request of holy Joseph, and took along with him that venerable patriarch's bones to secure for them honourable sepulture in the land of promise.\* Josias, who did that which was 'right in the sight of the Lord,' though he demolished the high places erected to Astaroth the idol of the Sidonians and to Chamos the scandal of Moab: though he broke in pieces the statues, cut down the groves, and overturned the altars of idolatry: though when he 'saw the sepulchres that were in the mount, he sent and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned them;' yet, amid all this, we observe this zealous and religious king, making the following enquiry, and issuing the following orders;— 'What is that monument which I see? And the men of the city answered: it is the sepulchre of the man of God, who came from Judæa;....and he said: let him alone, let no man move his bones. So his bones were left untouched with the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria.†

V.—SHOWN BY THE FIRST CHRISTIANS.

That these examples were not thrown away

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\* *Exod. C. xiii. V. 10.*

† *4 Kings, C. xxiii. V. 13-18. (Prot. transl. 2 Kings, &c.)*

upon the primitive Christians is evidenced by numerous, and highly interesting proofs.

VI.—BY CARRYING OFF THE BODIES OF THE MARTYRS.

The pious solicitude manifested in the times of persecution, by the faithful, to rescue the mutilated bodies of their martyred brethren, from the insults and contumely of the Pagans; is attested by a crowd of ancient and venerable authorities.

In the history of the Church by Eusebius, is a letter from the Church of Smyrna, in which, after giving an account of the martyrdom of St. Polycarp their bishop, the Smyrnians observe;—‘ Our subtle enemy, the devil, did his utmost that we should not take away the body, as many of us anxiously wished. It was suggested, that we should desert our crucified master, and begin to worship Polycarp. Foolish men! Who know not that we can never desert Christ, who died for the salvation of all men; nor worship any other. Him we adore as the Son of God; but we show deserved respect to the martyrs, as his disciples and followers. The centurion therefore caused the body to be burned; we then gathered his bones, more precious than pearls, and more tried than gold, and buried them. In this place, God willing, we will meet, and celebrate with joy and gladness the birthday of his martyr, as well in memory of those who have been

crowned before, as, by his example, to prepare and strengthen others for the combat.\*

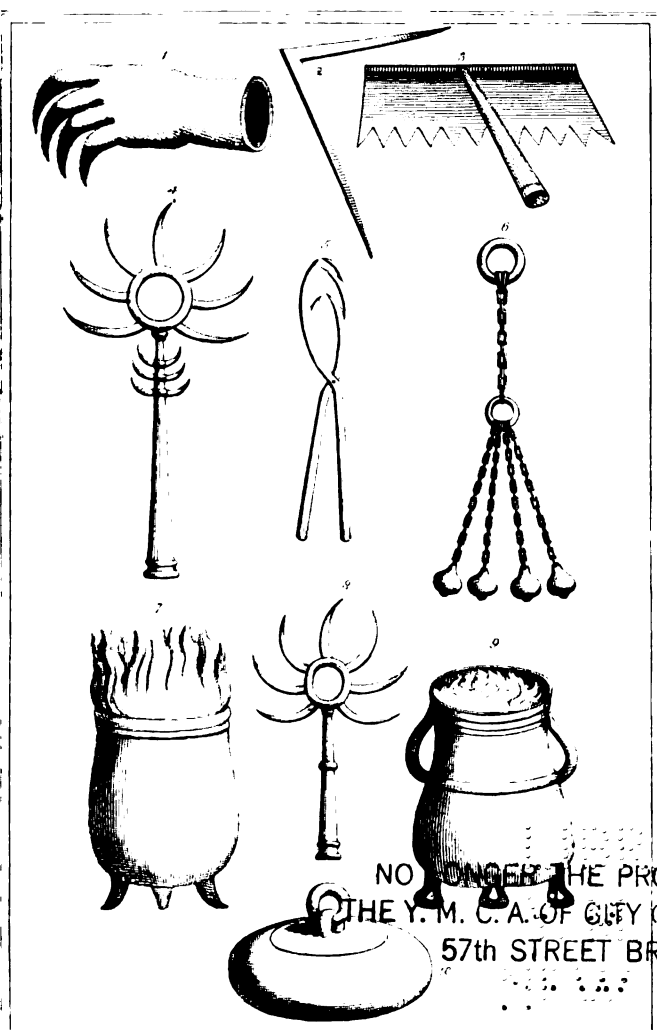
VII.—BY COLLECTING EVERYTHING STAINED WITH  
THEIR BLOOD.

Such was the zeal of the early Christians in this regard, that they frequently purchased, by a bribe, the connivance of the guards to collect and carry off the scattered members of the Christian champions; and obtained, at considerable sums of money, those several instruments,† which had been

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\* *Hist. Eccles. Lib. 4, Ch. xv. pp. 170, 171. See Faith of Catholics, &c. p. 413.*

† Several of those instruments employed by the Gentile persecutors of the infant Christian Church, for the laceration and torture of the martyrs' bodies, have come down to us, and are still preserved with particular respect in the churches and cabinets of Christian antiquities at Rome. They are made either of bronze or iron, and are variously fashioned in the shape of gloves, claws, hooks, combs, and whips. To these may be added certain large orbicular stones having rings fastened in them; all of which are accurately delineated after the originals, in the accompanying plate. No. 1 exhibits an iron glove, which was discovered in that part of the Roman catacombs, denominated the cemetery of Calepodius. (*Vide Aringhium, Roma. Sub. tom. ii. p. 687.*) Its fingers are curved inwards and sharp at the extremities. No. 2 represents an iron hook, which was found inserted in a martyr's head in the cemetery of St. Agnes. (*Vide Mamachium, tom iii. p. 205.*) No. 3 describes an iron comb which is now preserved in



• *Illustrations of the objects found at Beni Hasan, 1892, and in the  
tomb of the vizier, 1893, and in the tomb of the vizier, 1893.*

*Illustrations of the objects found at Beni Hasan, 1892, and in the  
tomb of the vizier, 1893, and in the tomb of the vizier, 1893.*



NO LONGER THE PROPERTY OF  
THE Y. M. C. A. OF CITY OF NEW YORK  
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used by the public executioner for the purpose of

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the convent of St. Mary Magdalen on the Quirinal hill, belonging to the Dominican nuns. Boldetti, (*p.* 319) and Mamachi, (*tom.* iii. *Antiq.* *p.* 205, *No.* 4) severally speak of it. Nos. 4 and 8 represent two instruments of martyrdom, at present in the museum of Christian antiquities at the Vatican library, and bear a resemblance to the talons of a bird of prey. No. 5 is a figure of the double claws which were found during the pontificate of Paul III, and are now kept amongst the relics of St. Peter's. Similar ones, though smaller, are preserved at the church of St. Cecilia in Trastevere. They are a species of forceps or pincers, and were known by the name of 'ungulæ bisulcæ,' under which appellation they are designated by Prudentius, (*Hymn.* i. *Peristeph.* *SS. Hemet. et Celed.* v. 44.) when he says:—

Illa (*fides*) virgas, et secures, et bisulcas ungulas  
 Ultro fortis expetebat, Christi amore interrita.

And in another place where that poet beautifully observes, in describing the same ardour of the primitive Christians to undergo the pains of martyrdom;—

Amor coronæ pene prævenit trucem  
 Lictoris artem, sponte nudas offerens  
 Costas, bisulcis exsecandas ungulis.

*Hymn.* x. *Peristeph.* *S. Romani*, v. 71, &c.

No. 6 expresses a whip made of iron-wire chains, loaded at the ends with knobs of bronze, now preserved in the Christian museum at the Vatican library. Sometimes this instrument of punishment was made of thongs on which were knotted leaden pellets, and is thus referred to by Prudentius;—

Tundatur, inquit, terga crebris ictibus,  
 Plumboque cervix verberata extuberet:

inflicting death or torture on any of the faith-

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\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Pulsatus ergo martyr illa grandine  
Postquam inter ictus dixit hymnum plumbeos.

*Hymn. x. Peristeph. S. Romani, v. 115, &c.*

Nos. 7 and 9 represent two caldrons which are frequently sculptured on the sepulchres of the martyrs, and are enumerated by Mamachi and other writers, amongst the instruments of torture. No. 7 is copied from the one inscribed upon the marble slab over the tomb of St. Victorina in the cemetery of Cyriaca, and is accompanied by this inscription:

BICTORINA IN PACE ET IN 

No. 9 is taken from another sepulchral marble, which closes up the niche in which reposes the body of St. Exuperantius in the cemetery of Callistus, and has on one side of it EXUPERANTIVS IN PACE. These caldrons were filled with boiling oil, pitch, or wax, into which the martyr was immersed. (*Boldetti, Osserv. sopra i Cimiterii, p. 318, & Mamachius, Antiq. Christ. t. iii. p. 213*). No. 10 exhibits one of those orbicular stones, with a ring fastened in the centre, of which many have been discovered in the catacombs, and some are shown in the churches at Rome. That those stones served the double purpose of weights for traffic and instruments of punishment, would seem evident after what Boldetti has remarked of them. He asserts that several have been found with figures indicative of their respective value, and he proves that the lictors and public executioners at Rome, were allowed, by the laws of the twelve tables, to punish culprits by hanging such weights to them. ‘Vincito aut nervo aut compedibus quindecim pondo non minore, aut si volet majore, majore vincito. (*L. xii. Tabular, apud Boldettium, p. 250.*) The

ful.\* Pious females used to mingle in the crowd of spectators, in order to tinge their handkerchiefs in the holy victims' blood, and employ sponges to imbibe from the ground as much of it as possible. The blood so collected was afterwards pressed into small vitreous or earthen vases, and deposited, together with the body of the Christian hero, in the catacombs. This is attested in part by the elegant Prudentius, who makes the following allusions to this office of religious veneration :

Palliolis etiam bibulæ siccantur arenæ  
 Nequis in infecto pulvere ros maneat ;  
 Siquis et in sudibus recalenti aspergine sanguis  
 Insidet, hunc omnem spongia pressa rapit.†

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martyrs were frequently left hanging up by the arms, with those weights attached to their feet : and when drowning was their punishment, one of those stones was suspended about the neck, or fastened to the feet, of these holy victims, and thus they were precipitated into the Tiber.

\* The public executioner was frequently invited to sell even his own garments that had been stained with the blood of the martyrs.—*Acta Martyrum, apud Boldettium, tom. i. p. 131.*

† *Hymn xi. Peristeph. S. Hippolyti, V. 141, &c.* The document from which Prudentius drew his information on this subject, is as curious as it is valuable and highly interesting. It was no other than a fresco-painting which adorned the walls of the chapel in the Roman catacombs, in which the body of St. Hippolytus was deposited. This painting was quite perfect in the days of the poet, and he has furnished us with a most minute description of it in

Those crimson dew, from martyr's heart that ran,  
Are rescued from th' unhallow'd tread of man

the hymn which he composed in honour of that martyr, who was put to death by being torn to pieces by wild horses. The name of this saint, Hippolytus, suggested this sentence to the Roman prefect, who, on learning it, exclaimed: 'Then like Hippolytus let him be dragged by wild horses!' The classic reader will recollect the story related by Ovid (*Metam. lib. 15, Fab. 14*) concerning the fabulous son of Theseus, Hippolytus, who falling over his chariot, and getting entangled in the harness of his own affrighted horses, was dragged along by them until he was dashed to pieces. The furious horses bounded off with the body of the saint trailing behind them. They dashed through brooks and over rocks and briars, they beat down hedges and every thing they encountered on the road. The stones, the thorns, were besprinkled with his blood, the ground was strewn with fragments of his mutilated body: these the faithful afterwards respectfully gathered up, and collected what drops of blood they could with sponges. With weeping eyes they most carefully scrutinized every spot of ground, to pick up every portion of the martyr's remains, all of which were deposited in the catacombs. Such was the scene that formed the subject of the picture which Prudentius thus describes:—

Picta super tumulum species liquidis viget umbris,  
Effigians tracti membra cruenta viri.  
Rorantes saxorum apices vidi, optime Papa,  
Purpureasque notas vepribus impositas.  
Docta manus virides imitando effingere dumos,  
Luserat, e minio russeolam saniem.  
Cernere erat, ruptis compagibus, ordine nullo  
Membra per incertos sparsa iacere situs.  
Addiderat charos, gressu, lacrymisque sequentes,

By pious brethren, who with linen band  
 Wipe up the gore that stains the thirsty strand.  
 What blood that, reeking, on the club may stay,  
 A sponge impress'd will gently sip away.



Vase containing the blood of a martyr, and the sponge by which it had been imbibed from the ground. See *Boldetti*, t. i. p. 187-213. The vase was imbedded in mortar, on which was scratched a palm-branch, with SA, the contraction of the word Sanguis (*blood*).

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Devia qua fractum semita monstrat iter.  
 Mærore attoniti, atque oculis rimantibus ibant,  
 Implebantque sinus visceribus laceris.  
 Ille caput nieneum complectitur, ac reverandam  
 Canitiem molli confovet in gremio.  
 Hic humeros, truncasque manus, et brachia, et ulnas,  
 Et genua, et crurum fragmina nuda legit.  
 Palliolis etiam bibulæ siccantur arenæ,  
 Nequis in infecto pulvere ros maneat

And again, while describing the martyrdom of St. Vincent, the poet says :—

Plerique vestem linteam  
Stillante tingunt sanguine,  
Tutamen ut sacrum suis  
Domi reservent posteris.\*

Crowds haste the linen vest to stain  
With gore distilled from martyr's vein,  
And, thus, a holy safeguard place  
At home, to shield their future race.

In the catacombs† of Rome are daily discovered

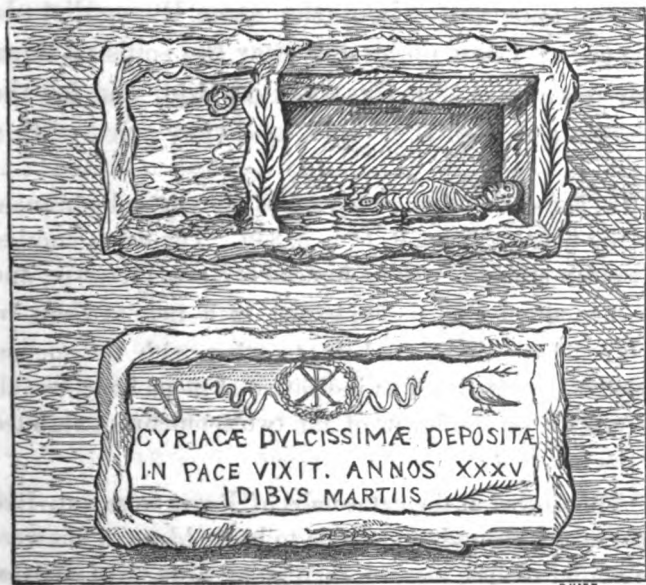
Siquis et in sudibus recalenti aspergine sanguis  
Insidet, hunc omnem spongia pressa rapit.

If other proofs were wanting, such a pious anxiety, depicted by the pencil of the painter and the pen of the poet, as manifested by the early Christians to collect the remains of a martyr, would alone be sufficient to demonstrate their religious veneration for their relics.

\* *Hymn. v. Peristeph. S. Vincentii, Vers. 341.*

† Among the most celebrated of these catacombs were those belonging to SS. Praxedes and Pudentiana, daughters of Pudens the Roman senator, who, with his whole family, was converted to the faith by the apostles SS. Peter and Paul. These sisters in faith and holiness, as well as according to the flesh, expended their patrimony in yielding succour to the martyrs while in chains,—in employing persons to rescue their remains from profanation,—and in giving them, after their triumph, an honourable interment in those catacombs under their estate upon the Salarian way, where they themselves were buried, and upon the enlarging and arranging of which they had ex-

the tombs of the ancient martyrs, distinguished from the sepulchres of their brethren around them by the palm-branch,\* or some other Christian hieroglyphic, inscribed upon the tablet that seals them up; but more particularly by the vase of blood, which was usually inserted outside on the wall, within an horizontal excavation in which was



Graves of the martyrs inserted in the walls of the Roman catacombs.  
*Boldetti, Osservazioni sopra i Cimiterii, &c. tom. i. p. 213.*

pended much money. For some observations on the Roman catacombs in general, the reader may consult Appendix IV.

\* The multitude, which no man could number, that St. John saw standing before the throne of the Lamb, clothed in white, held palms in their hands. *Apoc. C. vii.*

deposited the body of the martyr.\* The reason assigned for such a custom is, that the primitive Christians, admonished by St. John, in his book of the Apocalypse, regarded the martyrs as those ‘ Who are come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;† and who are, in fine, those blessed spirits of whom the same Evangelist observes :—‘ I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, and they cried with a

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V. 9. For some other observations on the palm-branch, see the note to Num. 9, *C. v.* p. 349. The dove, another Christian emblem, will be noticed at Num. 17, *C. vii*; and the monogram **X** is explained in a note to Num. iv. *C. ix.* These three symbols, together with the anchor, which interprets itself as indicative of pious hope, are all discernible on the lower of the two sepulchres exhibited in the woodcut.

\* The graves in the catacombs of Rome were not, like ours, in the ground, and liable to be trodden on, but were horizontal niches, pierced in regular rows, like shelves, one above the other, in the sides of the passages and subterranean labyrinths resorted to by the primitive Christians in the time of persecution, for the triple purpose of concealment—of burying the bodies of the faithful—and of solemnizing the Eucharistic sacrifice. The present and the following chapter, but especially the works of Aringhi, Boldetti, D'Agincourt, and Bottari, exhibit several engravings representing the catacombs as they now exist.

† *Apoc. C. vii. V. 14.*

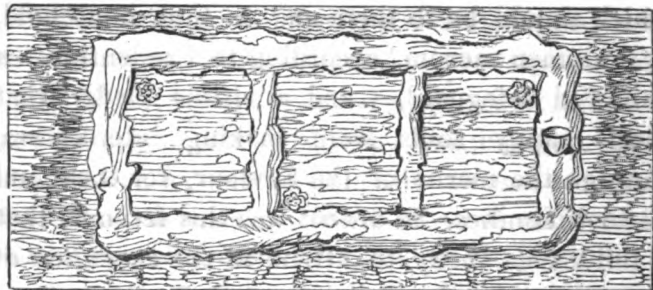


loud voice, saying :—‘How long, O Lord, (holy and true) dost thou not judge and revenge our blood.’\* Those ardent believers, therefore, emulously endeavoured to procure some relic of the martyrs, which should be to them and to their household, a ‘Tutamen sacrum,’ according to Prudentius,—a hallowed safeguard,—and a visible pledge that those happy souls were making intercession, through the merits of the Saviour, for them and all their families. So ardent was this fervour, that it influenced many to attend at the execution of the martyrs, and to spread out their garments to catch, if possible, some drops of that blood belonging to those heroes of Christianity : and illustrious matrons were known to exchange the most costly jewels for a garment which had been sprinkled with it. But such zeal must have exposed a number of Christians to detection, and subjected them to undergo the self-same tortures inflicted upon those for whose remains they exhibited so much veneration. To prevent all unnecessary exposure, and at the same time to encourage and gratify this laudable respect towards the combatants of Christ, it was recommended by the ecclesiastical authorities, that whatever blood of the martyrs was or might be collected by individual courage or address, should be deposited in vases affixed to their tombs, for the common benefit, in

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\* *Apoc. C. vi. V. 9, 10.*

such a manner, that the faithful might in security tinge their handkerchiefs with the precious gore, and carry it home as a glorious and invaluable relic.\*



A grave in the wall of the Catacombs with a vase containing the martyr's blood attached outside of it.—*Boldetti, t. i. p. 213.*

#### VIII.—BY THE CUSTOM OF USING THE MARTYRS' TOMBS AS ALTARS.

There is another and most important custom, introduced amongst the faithful in the very first ages of Christianity, and practised ever since, that clearly demonstrates the religious reverence which, from the earliest antiquity to the present time, has been unceasingly exhibited by the Church to the relics of the saints. That the primitive Christians were accustomed to erect their altars, for the celebration of the unbloody sacrifice of the Mass, upon the tombs of the martyrs, is certain. This is demonstrated not only by the descriptions of the

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\* See the observations of the learned prelate Bianchini, in his annotations to *Anastasius Bibliothecarius, de Vitis Rom. Pont. vol. ii. p. 244.*

Christian cemeteries which we have in ancient authors, but by the ocular proofs that are obvious to the world in many of those very altars still extant in the Roman catacombs, and are accessible to the inquisitive traveller.\*

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\* Engravings of these altars may be seen in any of the authors on the Roman catacombs; Bosio, Aringhi, Boldetti, and Bottari. One of these altars, copied from the *Roma Sotterranea* of M. Bottari, is given in Ch. x. No. 2, of this work. D'Agincourt has published one, which he discovered in 1780, in the cemetery of St. Hermetes situated just out of the walls of Rome, on the Salarian way. After enumerating the fresco-paintings around this sepulchre, and noticing how it was excavated in the tufo, like a niche, in the shape of a segment of a circle, and hence denominated by ecclesiastical writers, 'monumentum arcuatum,'—this profound antiquary observes:—'In the midst of those venerable symbols, upon a large slab of marble which completely covered the sarcophagus of the martyr, the first ministers of the Christian worship celebrated the mysteries of our faith in the time of persecution.—*D'Agincourt, tom. ii. p. 86, & Tav. xii. of the Italian translation.*

Most of the entrances into the Roman catacombs have been, for some years past, closed up to the public, on account of several persons, who would stray from their guides, having lost themselves, and perished in these inextricable windings. Any one, however, may readily procure an admittance into almost every one of the cemeteries, by applying to the proper quarter. Many of the most ancient and celebrated churches owe their origin to these altars on the martyrs' tombs in the catacombs. Instead

Whether St. John, in his Apocalypse (*c. vi. v. 9.*) where he thus details his vision of the mystic sacrifice in heaven ;—‘ I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held,’—referred to the custom as already established, of making the tombs of the martyrs serve for altars, or whether those words suggested to the first believers the propriety of introducing such an observance, this passage in the writings of the beloved disciple, is equally precious and well adapted to elucidate the practice. In one instance it will show its antiquity ; in the other, its scriptural origin. Amongst the early Christian writers there are two, St. Paulinus of Nola and Prudentius,\* whose testimony on this point is of intrinsic value, not only from its being curiously interesting, but because it is so full and unequivocal ; and the monuments which these authors describe, were perfectly entire at the epoch when they noticed them. In one of his letters addressed to Severus, St. Paulinus encloses some verses of his own composition, which were to be inscribed over the altar under which was

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of translating the bodies of St. Peter, St. Laurence, and several other distinguished martyrs, their respective temples were erected, and still remain, just over the spot in which they were first deposited in the cemeteries.

\* Concerning the period when they flourished, and the different works they wrote, consult the notes at p. 342.

deposited the body of St. Clare, of whom the venerable prelate says :—

*Sancta sub æternis altaribus ossa quiescunt.\**

*Epist. xii. ad Severum.*

His holy bones 'neath lasting altars rest.

From describing the Basilica of Nola, the saint proceeds to give a sketch of another but a smaller church, which he had just erected in the town of Fondi.† After furnishing some few details concerning this latter edifice, he says :—‘ That sacred ashes—some of the blessed relics of the apostles and martyrs—shall consecrate this little basilica also in the name of Christ, the saint of saints, the martyr of martyrs, and the Lord of Lords.‡ For Christ

\* St. Paulinus, in several other verses, mentions the fact of St. Clare’s body having been entombed under the altar.

*Digna pio domus est altaria, sub quibus artus  
Conditur examinos; nam spiritus æthere gaudet.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Clare fide, præclare actu, clarissime fructu,  
Qui meritis titulum nominis æquiparas,  
Casta tuum digne velant altaria corpus  
Ut templum Christi contegat ara Dei.*

*Epist. xii. ad Severum.*

† A very old city, still existing under the same name, and situated on the Appian way, between Terracina and Naples.

‡ Verum hunc quoque basiliculum, de benedictis apostolorum et martyrum reliquiis sacri cineres, in nomine Christi, sanctorum sancti, et martyrum martyris, et dominorum Domini, consecrabunt.—*Epist. xii. ad Severum.*

has testified that he will reciprocally become the confessor of his own confessors.\* For this church two inscriptions were composed by Paulinus; one, to accompany the painting with which he had adorned the apsis: the other, to announce that portions of the relics of the apostle St. Andrew, the evangelist St. Luke, and of St. Nazarius and other martyrs,† were deposited under the altar; and of which he sings:—

## DE RELIQUIIS.

Ecce sub accensis altaribus ossa piorum  
Regia purpureo marmore crusta tegit.  
Hic simul una pium complectitur arcula cœtum,  
Et capit exiguo nomina tanta sinu.—*Ibid.*

In regal shrines, with purple marble grac'd,  
Their bones are 'neath illumin'd altars plac'd.  
This pious band 's contained in one small chest,  
That holds such mighty names within its tiny breast.

Prudentius visited not only the more celebrated

\* Ipse enim testatus est, se vicissim confessorum suorum confessorem futurum. (*Ep. xii. ad Sever.*) This is an allusion to those words of our Redeemer, when he said:—'Every one, therefore, who shall confess me before man, I will also confess him before my Father who is in heaven.'—*St. Matt. C. x. V. 32.*

† Hic et apostolicas præsentat gratia vires  
Magnis in parvo pulvere pignoribus.  
Hic pater Andreas, et magno nomine Lucas.  
Martyr et illustris sanguine Nazarius,  
Quosque suo Deus Ambrosio post longa revelat  
Sæcula, Protasium cum pare Gervasio.  
*Epist. xii. ad Sever.*

sanctuaries in Spain, of which country he was a native, but also those of Italy, on his road to Rome, whither he travelled about the year 405. During his residence in that capital of Christianity, the poet was a devout frequenter of the catacombs; and has bequeathed to posterity a valuable record of his pious pilgrimages, in some beautiful hymns which not only attest his own and his contemporary fellow-christians' devotion towards the relics of the saints and martyrs, but certify the religious respect with which they were honoured by the Church in different countries, many years anterior to the period in which he wrote. In his hymn in honour of St. Hippolytus, he tells us that he visited the crypt, or sepulchral chapel,\* in which the holy martyr's remains were deposited; and after having described the entrance into the cemetery, and noticed with accurate minuteness the different groups in the fresco-painting which ornamented its walls, and to which we have already had occasion to refer, the poet makes the following remark :—

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\* This chapel was in the cemetery of Cyriaca, on the Tybertine way, and in what is called the Ager Veranus, near the Basilical church of St. Laurence ~~out of~~ the walls, close by which there are still some ruins in a vineyard, which are supposed to belong to an ancient church dedicated to St. Hippolytus, and built over his subterranean chapel in the catacombs. The account of this holy martyr's death has been given, and a reference made to the fresco which depicted it, in the note to No. 7, p. 379.

*be yon*

Talibus Hippolyti corpus mandatur opertis,  
 Propter ubi apposita est ara dicata Deo.  
 Illa sacramenti donatrix mensa, eadamque  
 Custos fida sui martyris apposita,  
 Servat ad æterni spem judicis ossa sepulcro,  
 Pascit item sanctis tibricolas dapibus.

*Hymn XI. Peristeph. V. 169, &c.*

To such deep caves, in dark profounds that wind,  
 Hippolytus's corse is now consign'd ;  
 And with a holy sepulture is grac'd,  
 Just where to God a sacred altar's plac'd.  
 To guard with zealous care its martyr'd dead,  
 And yield the sacrament, this table spread  
 Those bones is keeping in its hallow'd tomb,  
 To wait th' eternal Judge's gracious boon ;  
 And nourishes with sacred food all those  
 Who bow the knee to Christ where Tiber flows.

In his other hymns, Prudentius bears the most unequivocal testimony to the practice, even then a long time in use, of depositing the relics of the saints immediately under the altar. The hymn which he composed in honour of St. Eulalia,\* concludes with the following lines :—

Sic venerarier ossa libet  
 Ossibus altar et impositum :  
 Illa Dei sita sub pedibus  
 Prospicit hæc, populosque suos  
 Carmine propitiata fovet.

*Hymn III. Peristeph.*

'Tis meet her bones with rev'rence should be grac'd,  
 And altar honour'd o'er those bones that's plac'd.

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\* Eulalia was a Spanish young lady, a native of Merida, now a poor town in Estramadura, and interwove the crown of virginity with the palm of martyrdom, which she heroically suffered in the reign of Dioclesian.



Eulalia, seated at her Saviour's feet,\*  
Beholds those rites that thus her ashes greet.  
Won by the hymns that God's own people wake,  
She prays the pray'r of mercy for their sake.

And in those verses on the celebrated Spanish martyr, St. Vincent, he again recalls our attention to this practice.

Altar quietem debitam  
Præstat beatis ossibus :  
Subjecta nam sacrario,†  
Imamque ad aram condita  
Cælestis auram muneris  
Perfusa subtus hauriunt.

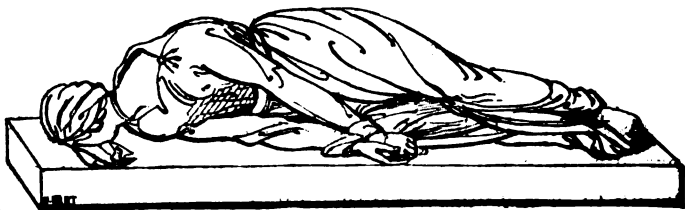
The altar opes its place of rest,  
And holds the martyr's bones so bless'd :

\* As the sacrifice of the Mass was continually offered upon the tomb of St. Eulalia, the saint is very appropriately said by Prudentius to be—'Dei sita sub pedibus'—(seated at the feet of God)—Jesus Christ, who is really and corporeally present in the blessed Eucharist in a sacramental manner.

† The poet no doubt intended to signify by the term 'sacrario,' the table of the altar on which was consecrated the blessed Eucharist ; and hence, as it became the seat on which were throned the body and blood of Christ, he describes the bones of St. Vincent reposing underneath it, as imbued with the flood of grace which issued from the altar, on account of the real and corporeal presence of Jesus there. He has embodied the same idea of the real-presence of Christ in the Eucharist, in that part of his hymn to St. Eulalia just now quoted.

Beneath that altar now reposing,\*  
That sacred table o'er them closing,  
Enshrined within such hallow'd bound,  
Suffus'd with heav'n-born gift profound,

\* The assertion of ancient writers on this point has been several times verified by fact. The bodies of the martyrs have often been discovered under the high-altars of the churches dedicated to God in their memory. The body of St. Martina, together with those of two other martyrs, SS. Concordius and Epiphanius, was found in 1624 under the high-altar of the ancient church near the Roman Forum, (*Boldetti, Osser. &c. p. 701*) which bears the name of that saint. The body of St. Agnes, and that of another virgin martyr, were also ascertained to be under the high-altar of her church, denominated *Fuori delle Mura*. (*Boldetti, p. 684.*) The bodies of many other saints have been discovered both in and out of Rome, under the high-altar of their respective churches. The traveller who has visited that center of Christianity, will remember how he was admonished of this fact with respect to St. Cecilia, by the beautiful recumbent statue of the saint, which lies so gracefully but modestly distended, with the head dis-severed, and the greater part enveloped with a veil; and exactly representing the body of St. Cecilia just as it was discovered under the high-altar of her church in 1599, by Cardinal Sfrondati.



This beautiful statue, the production (A.D. 1599) of Stefano

Those bones drink in that grace-infusing air  
That's sweetly streaming all around them there.

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Maderno, before he had attained the age of twenty-three, is a masterpiece of modern art. Like a solitary star, it arose to irradiate the darkness of that eclipse which, 'at the decline of the sixteenth century, had overcast the Arts, and into which, more especially, sculpture had been thrown, by the bold, but tasteless, handiworks of Bernini and his extravagant and meretricious school. This gracefully distended statue represents a dead body, as if it had just fallen gently to the ground. Its extremities are as ably executed as they are well disposed. The draping does not smother the form which it veils, and is arranged with all decorous propriety. The undulating bendings of the body are so easy, so very soft, and yet so perfectly free from the slightest affectation. The consequence is, that this figure may be regarded as a model of guileless, native gracefulness, tempered with feminine dignity. While contemplating it, the beholder imagines that he is gazing on the type of original modesty and innocence; and treads with cautious lightness, lest too harsh a foot-fall should startle the seeming slumberer, from her balmy gentle sleep. This statue would have done honour to the chisel of the English Praxiteles—our own classic Flaxman. The Italian sculptor has succeeded so admirably, through the very restrictions imposed upon him by his patron, who obliged him to impress upon his marble the self-same forms,—the self-same position,—to exhibit in fine, with scrupulous precision, the body of St. Cecilia, exactly as it was discovered, without even varying one fold of the garments in which the virgin-martyr was arrayed:

IX.—FROM RELICS BEING ANCIENTLY AS NOW ENCLOSED  
IN ALTARS AT THEIR CONSECRATION.

From the practice in the primitive Church of manifesting such a profound respect for the bodies of those who sealed their faith with their life-blood, as to esteem the tomb which held their remains as the most appropriate altar on which to offer the unbloody sacrifice of the new law, may be derived the ancient rite, still observed, of enclosing a small portion at least of relics in the altar which was consecrated, whenever the entire body of a saint could not be procured to be placed beneath it. For the antiquity of such a rite we possess the clearest testimony in the writings of the Fathers.

St. Ambrose, in a letter to his sister Marcellina,\* relates that when he had purposed to dedicate the new basilical church at Milan,† many persons, as with one voice, began to ask him if he would consecrate it in the same manner as he had previously done in the instance of the Roman Basilica, (another church at Milan near the Roman gate.) To this interrogation he replied:—‘ I will, if I can discover any martyr’s relics.’‡ The saint’s solicitude on this subject was

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\* *Epist.* lxxxv.

† This church is still standing, and is called, from this illustrious bishop, the Ambrosian Basilica.

‡ Cum basilicam dedicassem multi tamquam uno ore interpellare cœperunt, dicentes: sic in Romanâ, basilicam dedices? Respondi: faciam, si Martyrum reliquias invenero.

gratified. On excavating near the sepulchre of SS. Nabor and Felix, he discovered the bodies of SS. Gervasius, and Protasius,\* and thus speaks of the circumstance;—‘ Let these triumphant sufferers succeed to that place where Christ is the victim. But He who suffered for all men, is upon the altar; they who have been redeemed by his passion, are under the altar.’†

St. Paulinus of Nola, on learning the ardent desire of his particular friend Severus, to obtain some relics for the consecration of the church which he was then employed in building, addressed a letter to him on the subject, and assured him that if he had but the smallest fragment of relics more than was necessary for the consecration of his own church, at that very moment on the point of being finished, he would have gladly sent it to him : as

\* At the translation of these martyrs’ bones, a man named Severus, well known throughout the city of Milan as being blind for many years, was restored to his sight, by applying to his eyes a handkerchief which had been placed on the bier in which the relics lay. A prodigious multitude of people witnessed the miracle ; and the great St. Augustin who was at Milan at the very time, more than once vouches for its veracity.—(*St. Aug. Conf. lib. 9. c. vii.*—*De Civit. c. viii. Serm. 286.*)

† *Succedant victimæ triumphales in locum ubi Christus hostia est. Sed ille super altare, qui pro omnibus passus est: isti sub altari, qui illius redempti sunt passione.*—*Epist. xxii.*

it was beyond his power to present him with any remains of the martyrs, he would, however, send him some of the true cross, a particle of which he had procured as a present from the bishop of Jerusalem. Though but an atom of a tiny morsel, yet, St. Paulinus tells Severus, it will be to him a present safeguard, and the pledge of his eternal safety.\*

In another letter addressed to the same pious personage, Paulinus, under the supposition that

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\* Frater Victor inter alias operum tuorum, et votorum narrationes retulit nobis, desiderare te ad basilicam, quam modo apud Primuliacum nostram majorem priore condideris, de sacris sanctorum reliquiis benedictionem, qua adornetur domestica tua Ecclesia, ut fide et gratia tua dignum est. Testis est autem Dominus, quod si vel scrupulum sacri cineris habuissemus, suprâquàm nobis ad basilicam, quæ proxime in nomine Domini consummabitur, dedicandam necessarium erat, misissemus unanimi-  
tati tuæ: sed quia nos non habuimus hujus muneris copiam, et ille se spem ejusdem gratiæ copiosam habere dixit a sancta Silvia, quæ illi de multorum ex oriente martyrum reliquiis spopondisset, invenimus quod digne et ad basilicæ sanctificationem vobis, et ad sanctorum cinerum cumulandam benedictionem mitteremus partem particulæ de ligno divinæ Crucis. Quod nobis bonum benedicta Melania ab Jerusalem munere sancti inde Episcopi Joannis attulit. Accipite magnum in modico munus; et in segmento pæne atomo hastulæ brevis, sumite munimentum præsentis, et pignus æternæ salutis.—*Paulini, Epist. xi. ad Sever.*

by the kindness of Providence, Severus has been able to obtain some relics belonging to the Apostles and martyrs, submits to him some verses to be inscribed near the altar, the purport of which is to announce not only that martyrs' relics, as well as a part of the true cross which he had sent him, were enclosed in the altar, but that it was hallowed by the union of every thing belonging to the passion of Christ. For his cross, his body and his blood, he himself the God of martyrs—all were assembled there.\*

While these writers, whose works we have just been citing, attested what was the practice and religious feelings of Europe, the Church of Africa exhibited equally strong proofs of a similar devotion, and proclaimed that she used corresponding

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\* Quod si Dominus desiderium animæ vestræ fecerit secundum fidem vestram, adjiciens ornatui et sanctificationi operum vestrorum, ut sacros cineres de sanotis gloriosorum Apostolorum aut martyrum reliquiis adipiscamini dignum opere fidei vestræ et operis fidelitur elaborati dedicatione procul dubio celeberrima, sanctorum quoque reliquiis decens arbitramur, ut hoc etiam quod de cruce missimus, pariter depositum sacratumque veneremini. Quod si ita placuerit, placitum vestrum hi (si videbitur) versiculi nuntiabunt.

Divinum veneranda tegunt altaria fœdus,  
 Compositis sacra cum cruce martyribus,  
 Cuncta salutiferi coëunt martyria Christi,  
 Crux, corpus, sanguis, martyris ipse Deus.

*Paulini, Epist. xii. ad Sever.*

rites in regard to the relics of the saints. In the decree which was promulgated in 398, by the fifth Council of Carthage, it was ordained that the altars scattered over the country, and by the way-sides, that were constituted just like the memorials of the martyrs,\* in which neither the body, nor any relics of the martyrs could be proved to be deposited, should, if it were possible, be overturned by the bishops who presided over those districts.† The honour and respect which the Greek Church rendered to the martyrs' relics, are abundantly testified by two of its most eminent saints and writers, St. Chrysostom and St. Cyril of Jerusalem. The eloquent bishop of Constantinople frequently proclaims the reverence in which the relics of the

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\* The oratory or altar erected over the tomb of a martyr was anciently denominated either a Martyry, from the Greek *Μαρτύριον*, Confession, from the equivalent term in Latin *Confessio*,—or Memorial, because built to do honour to his memory. St. Optatus Milevitanus, who wrote about the year 370, designates the churches built over the tombs of St. Peter and of St. Paul by the appellation of Memoria, as he thus interrogates the Donatist Macrobius;—‘*Ibi Romæ sunt duorum memoriæ apostolorum. Dicite si ad has ingredi potuit, ita ut obtulerit illic; ubi sanctorum memorias esse constat. Lib. ii. de Schis. Donat.*

† Placuit ut altaria quæ passim per agros et vias, tamquam memoriæ martyrum constituuntur, in quibus nullum corpus, aut reliquiæ martyrum conditæ probantur, ab Episcopis qui eisdem locis præsunt, si fieri potest, evertantur.—*Can. xiv. Concil. Carth. v. tom. ii. p. 1217, Labbei.*



saints were held amongst the Greeks. He asserts that whole cities might be witnessed hurrying to the tombs of the martyrs.\* The venerable catechist of Jerusalem thus addressed his catechumens; —‘ In order that not only the souls of the just should be honoured, but that it might also be credited that there was a virtue infused into their bodies, the dead man who was thrown into the monument of Eliseus, on touching the corpse of the prophet, was again restored to life. The dead body of the prophet discharged an office which appeared peculiar to the soul, and what was itself lying dead, imparted life to the defunct; and what

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\* Σκόπει καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν μαρτυρῶν τοὺς τάφους τὰς πόλεις συντρέχουσας.—*Com. in Psal. cxv.*

‘ We depart not ’—Οὐκ ἀναχωροῦμεν τῶν τάφων αὐτῶν, &c. (*Hom. I. in Psal. xlviii.*)—He affirms—‘ from their sepulchres; it is here that kings put aside their diadems, and remain praying to be rescued from impending dangers, and to achieve a victory over their enemies.’ He triumphantly remarks, in reference both to Jew and Gentile, that the Apostles at their deaths, became more honoured than the greatest sovereigns upon earth;—For at Rome itself, the imperial metropolis, emperors, and consuls, and generals, abandoned every thing, and hastened to the sepulchres of the fisherman and tent-maker; and at Constantinople it was reputed a sufficient honour, by those who wore the diadem, to be buried, not along with the Apostles, but before their porches; and kings themselves were the fisherman’s portal-keepers.—*St. Chrys. Demonstr. quod Christus sit Deus, tom. v. p. 839.*

gave animation, remained as before amongst the departed. For what reason? That lest if Eliseus had arisen, such an event might have been attributed to his soul alone; and that it might be shown that in the absence of the soul, there still resided a certain virtue and power in the body of each saint on account of the just soul which during so many years inhabited that body and employed its agency. Let us not withhold our belief in such a thing as if it were not so, for if the handkerchiefs and aprons which exteriorly adhere, when applied to the bodies of the sick, raised up the infirm, how much more did the body itself of the prophet raise the dead to life again.\*

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\* Ὅτι δὲ μὴ μόνον τιμηθῶσι τῶν δικαίων αἱ ψυχαί, πιστευθῇ δὲ ὅτι καὶ ἔγκειται ἐν τοῖς τῶν δικαίων σώμασι δυνάμις· ὃ ρίφεις ἐν τῇ μνημείῳ του Ἐλισσαίου νεκρός, του νεκροῦ σώματος του προφητοῦ ἐφαψάμενος, ἐζωοποιήθη· καὶ τὸ σῶμα τοῦ προφήτου τὸ νεκρὸν, ἀπέτέλεσε ψυχῆς ἔργον· καὶ τὸ τελευτήσαν καὶ κείμενον, ζωὴν παρέσχε τῷ τελευτήσαντι· καὶ παρασχὼν τὴν ζωὴν αὐτὸ ὁμοίως ἔμεινεν ἐν νεκροῖς· διὰ τί; ἵνα μὴ ἐξανασταντος Ἐλισσαίου, τῇ ψυχῇ μόνῃ προσγραφῇ το πρᾶγμα· δειχθῇ δὲ, ὅτι καὶ ψυχῆς μὴ παρούσης, ἔγκειται τις δυνάμις τῷ τῶν ἁγίων σώματι, διὰ τὴν ἐν τοσοῦτοις ἔτεσιν ἐνοικήσασαν ἐν αὐτῷ δικαίαν ψυχὴν, ἥς उपρέτημα γέγονε. Καὶ μὴ ἀπιστῶμεν νήπιοι, ὡς μὴ γεγενημένου τούτου. εἰ γὰρ σουδάρια καὶ σημερινὰ, τὰ ἐξωθεν ὄντα, τῶν σωμάτων ἀπτόμενα τῶν νοσούντων, ἤγειρε τοὺς ἀσθενεῖς· πῶσω μᾶλλον αὐτὸ τὸ σῶμα τοῦ προφήτου ἤγειρε τον νεκρον; —S. Cyrilli, *Catech.* xviii. p. 293.

Another ancient Father has embodied the substance of the same remarks in some very elegant ideas. After noticing, from sacred scripture, that the earthly tabernacle of

**X.—RESPECT ANCIENTLY PAID TO RELICS PROVED FROM  
THE CALUMNIES OF THE HEATHENS.**

From the furious invectives and calumnies launched against the Christian faith, by the sophist Eunapius, who lived about the year 389, may be accurately collected various facts which testify what religious veneration the Church at that epoch exhibited towards the relics of the saints.\* The

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the righteous man becomes the temple of the Holy Ghost, St. Germanus of Constantinople institutes a comparison between the body of the saint departed, and a vessel once employed to hold some precious perfume, but now empty of the fragrant liquid; and observes that as the vase continues redolent of the delicious aroma of the balm it once contained, after every drop of it be evaporated; so the relics of the saint—the vase that once was hallowed and replenished with the Holy Ghost—remain imbued with its sanctifying sweets, and exhale its odour though the spirit be departed. This elegant comparison of the venerable Patriarch, may be happily expressed, by employing, with a very little variation, the beautiful language of a celebrated living poet:—

*Long long shall saints' relics with virtue be fill'd,  
As the vase in which roses have once been distill'd,  
You may break, you may ruin the vase if you will,  
But the scent of the roses will hang round it still.*

\* *Ii (Christiani) namque condita et salita eorum (Martyrum) capita qui ob scelerum multitudinem a iudiciis extremo supplicio fuerant affecti, pro divinis ostentabant; iis genua submittebant eos in deorum numerum receptabant, ad illorum sepulcra pulvere sordibusque conspur-*

virulent declamations of that assailant of Christianity assure us ; 1. That at the period in which he wrote (anno 389) whenever a temple of some heathen deity became appropriated to the service of the One true living God ; or when a new edifice was erected for the purpose of religion, it was the universal custom to deposite in it the relics of the martyrs : 2. That these mortal remains of the saints inshrined beneath the altars, were, on certain days, exposed to the public veneration of the faithful, who were sedulous in rendering them a respectful homage : 3. That such was the reverence which the ancient Church displayed towards the bodies of the martyrs, that the unbelievers, judging from mere exterior appearances, erroneously asserted that the Christians looked upon the saints as Gods, and worshipped them with divine honours : 4. That the saints were regarded by the faithful as patrons who could assist them by their prayers and friendly intercession.

#### XI.—FROM THE OBJECTIONS OF HERETICS.

In the following century, (anno 404) St. Jerom triumphantly defended the practice of venerating the relics of the saints, against the attacks and

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cati : in iis nonnulli martyres, diaconi alii, et legati, arbitrique precum petitionumque apud eos nominabantur.—*Eunapius apud Baronium, anno 389, Num. lxxxix. tom. vi. p. 59.*

contumely of Vigilantius and others. That heretic and his partisans denounced all those who rendered this pious homage, as idolaters, and Cinerarians or worshippers of ashes. To such an acrimonious objurgation, St. Jerom answered;—‘We do not adore the relics of the martyrs.....but we honour them that we may adore him whose martyrs they are; we honour the servants that the respect which is paid to them may be reflected back upon the Lord.’\* / Vigilantius feigned to be indignant that their relics were folded up in costly silks and precious stuffs. St. Jerom asks him if Constantine had perpetrated a sacrilege, by translating to Constantinople, in most splendid shrines, the relics of SS. Andrew, Luke, and Timothy? Or if the Roman pontiffs acted wrong when they offered up sacrifice to God, over the bones of the deceased Peter and deceased Paul, which the true believer considered to be venerable, but Vigilantius contemned as vile dust: or when they, as well as every other bishop through the earth, looked upon the tombs of the martyrs as the altars of Christ?

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\* *Honoramus reliquias martyrum, ut eum, cujus sunt martyres, adoremus. Honoramus servos, ut honor servorum redundet ad Dominum.—S. Hier. Epist. xxxvii.*

Male facit ergo Romanus Episcopus, qui super mortuorum hominum Petri, et Pauli, secundum nos ossa veneranda, secundum te vilem pulvisculum, offert Domino sacrificia et tumulos eorum, Christi arbitratur altaria.—*S. Hier. Epist. advers. Vigilant.*

Vigilantius tauntingly noticed a usage which then prevailed of illuminating the martyrs' sepulchres; St. Jerom vindicated this manifestation of religious homage from the strictures of his adversary by the following reply;—‘The Apostles also murmured that the ointment was squandered, but the voice of Christ himself rebuked them, for neither did Jesus stand in need of the ointment, nor are wax-lights necessary for the martyrs.’\*

XII.—VENERATION OF RELICS IN THE ANGLO-SAXON CHURCH.

If we consult the annals of our native history, we shall discover that in the veneration which they exhibited towards the relics of the saints, our Anglo-Saxon forefathers emulated the piety of their Roman and Oriental brethren in the faith. ‘The veneration of relics was diffused as far as the knowledge of the gospel; and their presence was universally deemed requisite for the canonical dedication of a church or an altar. With this view, Gregory the Great, as soon as he heard of the success of the missionaries, was careful to send them a supply of relics :† and scarce a pilgrim re-

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\* *Liber advers. Vigilant.*

† Hence we are informed by Carte, that the veneration of relics was introduced into England by the Roman missionaries, but was unknown to the Scottish bishops, Aidan, Finan and Colman, *Carte. Hist. vol. i. p. 241*. Yet Finan ordered the bones of his holy predecessor to be taken out

turned from Gaul or Italy, who had not procured, by entreaty or purchase, a portion of the remains of some saint or martyr. But the poverty of the Saxon Church was quickly relieved by the virtues of her children ; and England became a soil fertile in saints. Scarcely was there a monastery that did not possess one or more of these favourites of heaven : their bodies lay entombed in the vicinity of the principal altar ; and around were suspended the votive offerings of the multitudes, who had experienced the efficacy of their intercession. In the hour of distress or danger, the afflicted votary threw himself at the foot of the shrine with an avowal of his unworthiness, but expressed an humble confidence that the Almighty would not refuse to the merits of the patron, what he might justly deny to the demerit of the suppliant. Success often attended these petitions: the clergy of each community could appeal to a long list of preternatural cures owing to the intercession of the saints, whose bodies reposed in their church ; and the crowds of visitants, whom these miracles attracted, added to their reputation and importance.\*

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of his tomb and placed on the right side of the altar, 'juxta venerationem tanto pontifici dignam,' *Bed. lib. iii. c. 17*, and Colman, at his departure, carried with him into Scotland a part of the relics of the same saint, *Bed. lib. iii. c. 26*, see also *Bede on St. Oswald, lib. iii. e. 11, 12*.

\* *Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church, by the Rev. Dr. Lingard, pp. 282, 283.*

XIII.—MIRACLES WROUGHT THROUGH RELICS ATTESTED  
BY PROTESTANTS.

That the same Almighty God, who wrought such miracles by the bones of Eliseus,\* by St. Peter's shadow,† and by the handkerchiefs which had touched the body of St. Paul;‡—has also condescended to impart, on various occasions, a wonder-working efficacy to the relics of those saints who adorned the Church at more recent periods, is acknowledged by Protestants themselves. Chemnitz admits§ that the great St. Augustin mentions the fact of a blind woman having recovered her sight, at the translation of St. Stephen's relics. In the observations of Sir Wm. Hamilton on the terrible eruption of Mount Vesuvius in the year 1767, is the following curious paragraph;—'In the midst of these horrors, the mob, growing tumultuous and impatient, obliged the Cardinal to bring out the head of St. Januarius, and go with it in procession to the Ponte Maddalena, at the extremity of Naples towards Vesuvius; and it is well attested here, that the eruption ceased the moment the saint came in sight of the mountain; it is true the noise ceased about that time, after having lasted about five hours, as it had done the preceding days.'|| Talking of the withered elm in the Piazza del Duomo at Flo-

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\* 4 *Kings*, C. ii. V. 14. (*Protest. version*, 2 *Kings*, &c.)

† *Acts*, C. v. V. 15. ‡ *Ibid.* C. xix. V. 12. § *Examen.* p. 10.

|| *Letter to the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Morton*, p. 35.



rence, which was instantly restored to vegetation by the shrine, in which was inclosed St. Zenobia's body, resting during the ceremony of translation, on its trunk, Forsyth makes the following remark ; — ' This elm puzzles me more than any of their (the Catholics') miracles. The event happened at a time, when Florence was more populous than at present, and the most enlightened city in Europe ; — it happened in the most public place in the whole town — on an object familiar to every inhabitant — and in the presence of many thousands, who were then attending the solemn removal of the saint from St. Lorenzo to the cathedral. The event is recorded by contemporary historians, and is inscribed on a marble column now standing where the tree stood — a column erected in the face of those very persons who saw the miracle performed, and who certainly, if the inscription were false, would not have suffered so impudent a forgery to insult them.'\*

#### XIV.—RELICS COLLECTED BY PROTESTANTS.

That the Catholic custom of venerating the relics of the saints should be censured by English Protestants, is inconsistent, or, rather, inexplicable. An Englishman will manifest a devotion occasionally enthusiastic towards every memorial appertaining to the great and glorious personages of the

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\* Forsyth's *Remarks during an Excursion in Italy*, p. 369.

olden times. Whenever he visits those places that have been signalized by their sufferings, ennobled by their virtues and achievements, or have served as their residence, he labours to discover and carry away with him a particle of something any how connected with their story :\* and so far has the mania for gleaning such curiosities prevailed amongst us, that many persons have been known to expend large sums of money to possess themselves not only of articles that were at some time or other used by public, and remarkable individuals,† but

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\* At Hardwick in Derbyshire is preserved a coverlet, said to have been wrought by the needle of the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots, while a captive there; but it suffered such mutilations from relic-stealing visitants to that interesting pile, that it was withdrawn from public inspection.

† The chair in which Wickliffe expired, together with the pulpit from which he was accustomed to preach, a piece of his cloak and an oak table which belonged to him are still preserved in Lutterworth Church.

A recent author, talking of the crowds of classic travellers who go to pay their homage to the tomb of Virgil, as a small grotto near Naples is denominated, observes :—"The English pilgrims are the most numerous. A bay-tree did grow out of the top of it, but the keeper told me, that the English had pulled off the leaves, as long as any remained, in the same spirit I suppose, which induced the Ladies in England to pull the hairs out of the tail of Plutarch's horse."—*Diary of an Invalid by H. Matthews.* 1820, p. 202.

even of those objects that once belonged to the most flagitious characters.\*

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Not only cuttings from the weeping willow, but blades of grass that grew over the tomb of Napoleon have been regarded as valuable gifts. The tree under which the Duke of Wellington stood during part of the day at Waterloo, has entirely disappeared through the avidity of travellers to secure a chip of it. The uniform which was worn by the gallant Nelson when he fell at Trafalgar, is carefully preserved in Westminster Abbey. King Edward's staff and crown are looked upon with so much veneration that they are most conspicuously employed at the coronation of our sovereigns. A coat that once belonged to Charles XII of Sweden was lately sold in London for a large sum of money. At Eysenach in Germany, there stands the ancient Castle of Wartburg in which Martin Luther resided some time; the room is still shown which that innovator occupied, and in which the discussion between himself and the devil, as Luther himself relates, took place (*Luther*, Tom. vii. *Witt*, 1588, fol. 443, and Tom. vi. *Germ.* fol. 28). On the table which has been despoiled of many a splinter, there are two logs of wood regularly supplied by the servant who shows the house, and are purposely left to satisfy the cravings felt by the admirers of Luther for some relic of their hero; and when the writer of this note saw them, they were closely pared.

\* It not unfrequently happens that the very instruments which some wicked wretch employed in the murder of his neighbour, are in great request. The very rope in which the notorious Thurtell was executed, and his famous air-gun, were contended for by purchasers of such wares.

Whatever the Protestant can adduce in favour of this custom of honouring and preserving the memorials of the illustrious or infamous dead, whether orator or poet, general, or statesman, will be advanced with double energy by the Catholic in his defence of the veneration which he exhibits to the relics of the saints.

If the classic scholar may innocently indulge his raptures as he gazes on the Formian cenotaph of Cicero, the tomb of Virgil, and the sarcophagus of Scipio, or exultingly gathers up a fragment of the tessellated pavement trodden on by Horace in his Sabine villa;—if without the slightest imputation of superstition, he may make a poet-pilgrimage to the grave of Petrarca at Arquà—to Ariosto's chair and inkstand—to the prison-cell of Tasso at Ferrara—to the birth and burial place of his own Shakspeare at Stratford upon Avon, and join there in celebrating the festival of the English bard; surely the Catholic may as harmlessly indulge his religious feelings, while standing by the shrines of St. Peter and St. Paul, St. Matthew and St. Bartholomew,\* he offers his homage to the dust of those venerable lips by which Jesus Christ has spoken to us, and from which came forth a 'light more resplendent than lightning,'† whose bodies

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\* The bodies of those apostles are preserved at Rome, St. Matthew's excepted, which is at Salerno.

† *St. Chrysostom, Hom. xxxii.*

in this life were the temples of the Holy Ghost,—whose pens were guided by the same celestial Spirit—who have bequeathed to the world not only specimens of the most sublime and stirring eloquence—not only examples of the most exalted heroism,\* but the word of God,—the Gospel-truths of Jesus, in place of a love-sick sonnet and a tale of ribaldry that instead of elevating and purifying, corrupt and enervate the human heart. Nor can it be criminal in him to yield a fitting reverence to Christian heroes and the propagators of the Gospel; and a harmless action in his fellow-countryman to pay a similar respect to heathen worthies, or modern writers of splendid though oftentimes perverted talents.

We may conclude this portion of our subject in the language of St. Ambrose;—‘ We honour the

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\* ‘To abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible, if it were endeavoured, and would be foolish, if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses, whatever makes the past, the distant or the future, predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me, and far from my friends, be such frigid philosophy, as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plains of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona.’ *Dr. Johnson, Tour in the Western Islands of Scotland.*

memory of that virtue which shall never die ; we honour those ashes, which the confession of faith has consecrated ; we honour in them the seeds of eternity, we honour that body which has taught us to love the Lord and not to fear death for his sake. And why should not the faithful honour the body which even devils venerate ; which they tormented indeed in death, but to which they show respect in the sepulchre ? we honour then the body which Christ himself honoured in the sword, and which with him will remain in Heaven.\*

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\* *Serm. lv. in Natali SS. Martyr. Nazarii et Celsi, T. 2, in append. p. 467.*

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## CHAPTER VII.

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## PART THE SECOND.

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### CHAPTER VII.

#### ON PURGATORY.

**AFTER** having vindicated the doctrine of the Church concerning the honour which she invites us to manifest towards such amongst her members, as are already triumphing along with Christ in the celestial Jerusalem, we will now proceed to the elucidation of that dogma of her creed, respecting those others of her children, who have left this life with souls too stained with sin to find an instant entrance into heaven, but whose transgressions were not of that enormity to merit hell's eternal torments, and are therefore dwelling in a middle state, and going through a purgation preparatory to an admittance into heaven's beatitude.

#### I.—DEFINITION OF PURGATORY.

This middle state, between hell and heaven, is denominated Purgatory, which we define to be a place or state, wherein are purified, before their admittance into Heaven, 'where nought defiled

can enter,\* such souls as leave this life with the pardon of their sins, as far as regards the GUILT and ETERNAL punishment ; but are yet subject to some temporal pain still remaining due ; or are not perfectly cleansed from the blemish of those defects and imperfections, which we designate venial sins.

## II.—BELIEF OF THE CHURCH ON THIS POINT.

Concerning this article of faith, the Church, in the Council of Trent, has expressed herself in the following manner : ‘ The Catholic Church, instructed by the Holy Spirit, has taught in her councils, from the sacred writings, and the ancient tradition of the Fathers, and this synod has now recently declared, that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls there detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful, but principally by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar :† and, by a particu-

\* *Apos. C. xi. V. 27.*

† Cum Catholica Ecclesia, Spiritu Sancto edocta, ex sacris litteris, et antiqua patrum traditione, in sacris Conciliis, et novissimè in hac œcumenica Synodo docuerit, Purgatorium esse ; animasque ibi detentas, fidelium suffragiis, potissimum vero acceptabili altaris sacrificio juvari ; præcipit sancta Synodus Episcopis, ut sanam de Purgatorio doctrinam a sanctis patribus et sacris Conciliis traditam, à Christi fidelibus, credi, teneri, doceri, et ubique prædicari diligenter studeant.—*Sess. xxv. Decretum de Purgatorio.*

lar canon of that Council, she pronounces a formal condemnation on those who shall maintain, 'That after receiving the grace of justification, the guilt and eternal punishment are remitted to every repentant sinner, in such a way, that no temporal pain remains to be endured either in this or in the world to come, in Purgatory, before an entrance into Heaven can be obtained.'\*

The Catholic, therefore, believes that there is a middle state for souls who depart this life in God's grace, yet not without some smaller stains and guilt of punishment, which retard their entrance into heaven; and that the souls of the faithful, although they be detained in this purgatory, continue, however, to be the living members of that body, of which Christ Jesus is the head; and are, in consequence, alleviated by the prayers and suffrages of their fellow-members living upon earth. The situation of this place,—the quality and nature of its punishments,—for what period of time the captive souls may be confined there,—the mode in which the prayers, the alms-deeds, and the fastings offered up to Heaven in their behalf, are rendered available to their refreshment, whether by

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\* Si quis post acceptam justificationis gratiam, cuilibet peccatori pœnitenti ita culpam remitti, et reatum æternæ pœnæ deleri dixerit, ut nullus remaneat reatus pœnæ temporalis exsolvendæ vel in hoc sæculo, vel in futuro in Purgatorio, antequam ad regna Cœlorum aditus patere possit; anathema sit.—*Sess. vi. Canon 30.*

way of intercession or satisfaction,—the appellation of this place, whether it should be Purgatory, Limbo, or a middle state, we consider as questions impertinent to faith, and, indeed, as altogether idle and superfluous.\*

### III.—TRUTHS INCLUDED IN THE DOCTRINE OF PURGATORY.

The definition of the Church comprehends four articles of doctrine, which we should be careful to discriminate.

The first is, that after the guilt of sin, and its *eternal* punishment, have been forgiven in the sacraments, still there may remain a temporal pain to be endured by the offender : the second is, that when this punishment is not completed in this life, it may be inflicted, after death, upon the soul : the third is, that the prayers and the good works of the living, are serviceable to the dead : the fourth, that the Mass has the virtue of satisfying the Divine justice for the transgressions of the living and the dead.

### IV.—TEMPORAL PUNISHMENT TO BE ENDURED FOR SIN, THOUGH ITS ETERNAL PUNISHMENT BE PARDONED.

That after the guilt of sin and its eternal punishment have been forgiven, there still may remain

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\* Bellarminus, *de Purgatorio*, lib. ii. Veron, *Regula Fidei*, C. xiv. xv.

some temporal pain to be endured, is a truth that can be easily established by various proofs presented to us in the holy Scriptures. Death, we are assured by St. Paul, is one of the punishments inflicted on the human race in consequence of original sin :—‘ Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin came death ; and so death passed upon all men :\* and the book of Genesis contains this sentence pronounced upon Adam and his race :—‘ Because thou hast eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat, cursed is the earth in thy work : with labour and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life : and in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the earth.”† Now, though we be cleansed from the stain of original sin in the sacrament of baptism, yet death, the hardships, the trouble, and afflictions of this world, infallibly await us, and constitute the temporal pain inflicted upon us, on account of our original transgression committed in the sin of Adam. David being admonished of his crimes by the prophet’s parable, exclaimed to Nathan :—‘ I have sinned against the Lord. But Nathan said to David : The Lord also hath taken away thy sin ; thou shalt not die. Nevertheless, because thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, for this thing the child that is born to thee

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\* 1 *Rom. C. v. V. 12.*† *Gen. C. iii. V. 17-19.*

shall surely die."\* This temporal punishment was rigorously inflicted, although a prophet's mouth assured the royal penitent that the Lord had taken away the sin, and consequently obliterated its guilt, and pardoned its *eternal* chastisement. The instances of Moses, of Aaron, and of the people of Israel, who sinned against the Lord,—and though forgiven, were visited with punishment, are equally pertinent.†

The people of God, under the old law, most explicitly believed in this infliction of temporal chastisement for sin, even after the remission of its eternal punishment; and being persuaded that in the event of the transgressor's departing out of this life before he had gone through the whole of it, he must endure the remainder in a future world, they offered up peculiar sacrifices for the repose and comfort of the dead;‡ and it is a practice still observed most scrupulously amongst the Jews, to pray for their departed brethren.

This religious belief amongst the Jews, must necessarily include the doctrine of a middle state, an article of faith equally comprised in the symbol of genuine Christianity, and which we shall now proceed to notice.

\* *Kings*, C. xii. V. 13, 14. (Protest. Trans. 2 *Samuel*.)

† *Numb.* C. xiv. V. 20.

‡ 2 *Mach.* xii. Concerning the canonicity of this part of Scripture, the reader is referred to Appendix III.

V.—THE BELIEF OF A MIDDLE STATE HELD BY THE  
PATRIARCHS, ETC.

The most conspicuous traces of a belief in a third or middle state are obviously discernible throughout the whole of the Old Testament. It was thus that Jacob, while weeping for his son Joseph, under the impression that a wild beast had devoured him, exclaimed ;—‘ I will go down to my son INTO HELL, mourning.’\* The Royal Psalmist is continually making an allusion to such a credence. In one of his canticles, he sings ;—‘ Thou wilt not leave my soul in ‘HELL :’† in another he exclaims ;—‘ Thou hast delivered (O Lord) my SOUL from the LOWER Hell :’‡ and again he asks ;—‘ Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of HELL ?§ That the Hell which is so positively mentioned in these passages, is not the abode of Satan and his fallen angels, is certain ; since it is incredible that Jacob should have presumed that the soul of his youthful, almost infant Joseph, was condemned to a place of such eternal punishment ; and David would neither have said, that his soul was not to be left there, if he wished to speak of that region, from which there is no returning ; nor would he have signified his soul’s deliverance from the ‘ lower Hell,’ unless he knew there was a *lowest* one.

These, and similar portions of the ancient scrip-

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\* Gen. C.xxxvii. V.35. † Psalm xv. V.10. ‡ Ib.lxxxv. V.13.

§ Ib. lxxxviii. V. 49. Protestant version, Ib. lxxxix. &c.

tures, were such powerful auxiliaries in supporting the dogma of Purgatory, by the demonstration which they furnished of the existence of a middle state, that they offered considerable annoyance to the innovators of the sixteenth century, who, to weaken, if not annihilate, their strength, did not hesitate to corrupt them by incorrect translations. Hence in those English versions of the scripture which were severally made in the years 1562, 1577, and 1579, whenever the Hebrew *שְׁאוֹל* *sheol*, the Greek *αις*, of the Septuagint, and the 'Infernus' of the Latin Vulgate, seemed to favour the doctrine of Purgatory, these words were rendered into English by '*grave*;' without caring, in the least, about the violent distortion which was inflicted on the passage, or the absurdity it was condemned to assume by such a translation. Thus it is, that in the Protestant Bible, Jacob is made to say;—'I will go down into the *grave* unto my son,'\*—as if the patriarch imagined that his son Joseph had been buried in a *grave*, when on the contrary, he had just before exclaimed;—'It is my son's coat, an evil wild beast hath *eaten* him, a beast hath *devoured* Joseph.'† The Catholic Bible maintains the reverence of the sacred volume by rendering the passage in a proper manner, thus—'I will go down to my son in *Hell*.'

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\* *Gen.* xxxvii. *V.* 35.

† *Ib.* *V.* 33.



## VI.—A MIDDLE STATE BELIEVED BY THE HEATHENS.

That the existence of a middle state constituted a part of that revelation communicated by Almighty God to the first inhabitants of the earth and the early patriarchs, is a truth which may be demonstrated from other sources than those of the inspired volumes. The belief in such a doctrine forms a most prominent article in the theology of all the nations of the ancient world, amongst whom this uniformity of credence on such a point cannot be ascribed to any other incident than the one and universal tradition originating from the same promulgation, and afterwards regularly handed down through each successive generation amid the various nations of the earth. Though much deformed by the ridiculous errors, and the superstitions with which Gentilism and idolatry had connected this dogma, still it is eminently conspicuous in the religious systems of ancient Egypt, India, Greece, and Rome. Vestiges of such a primitive doctrine may be easily recognized in many of their religious ceremonies; but no where do we discover it so strikingly as in the writings of some of their poets, who principally contributed to disfigure the native simplicity of this truth with such a superstructure of frivolous though elegant fable.\*

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\* According to the Egyptian mythology, the 'Amenti' was supposed to be the region of the dead, and the same

VII.—THE EXISTENCE OF A MIDDLE STATE BETWEEN  
HEAVEN AND HELL FORMALLY ATTESTED BY THE  
JEWS.

That the whole nation of the Jews openly pro-

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place as that which the Greeks denominated 'Hades,' and the Latins 'Tartarus.' Thoth was the perpetual companion of Osiris, and after him the first personage in the Amenti, where he had fixed his residence and his tribunal to regulate the destinies of the souls of each in their transmigrations from the body of one man into another. The Egyptians divided the whole world into three zones. The first was the zone of the earth, or the zone of trial; the second was the zone of the air perpetually agitated by winds and storms, and was considered as the zone of temporal punishment; and the third was the zone of rest and tranquillity, which was above the other two. It was supposed that some souls after having parted from the body, were thrown into the second zone, to be whirled about by the winds through the regions of the air till they were called upon either to return to the first zone, to animate a new body, and to undergo fresh trials in expiation of their former sins, or to be removed unto the third, where the air was perpetually pure and tranquil. (*Lectures on the elements of Hieroglyphics and Egyptian Antiquities by Spineto, p. 142, &c.*) At Table 5 at the end of the Lectures may be seen a curious picture representing the trial and judgment which the Egyptians supposed the soul of man to undergo, before it was allowed to enter the region of rest and happiness. It is taken from a valuable MS. existing in the Vatican library, and has been accurately described by that learned Italian prelate Monsignor Angelo Mai, in a work of his entitled—*Catalogo de' Papiri Vaticani e reflessioni Critiche, Roma, 1825.* The doctrine

fessed a formal belief in a middle state is incontestable ; for whether we admit, with the Catholic

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of the transmigration of souls was not only held by the ancient Brachmins, but is still retained amongst the present Banians, (Bernier, *Lettre touchante les gens de l'Hindoustan*) and many others in India and China, (La Loubère, *du Royaume de Siam*, tom. I) and constitutes the principal foundation of their religion. The Mahometans admit the existence of a purgatory, and offer up prayers for their dead. (See Allatius, *de Utriusque Ecc. de Purg. consensione*, p. 276.) Pythagoras, in ancient times, was the strenuous advocate of the same opinion amongst the Greeks and their colonies in Italy and Sicily, and taught his followers to believe by his metempsychosis, that after death, men's souls passed into other bodies of this or that kind, according to the manner of life they had led. If they had been vicious, they were imprisoned in the bodies of miserable beasts, there to do penance for several ages, at the expiration of which they returned again to animate the body of man. The whole ceremonial [observed by the ancient Greeks in celebrating the funeral obsequies of their departed relatives and the expiatory sacrifices they offered to the infernal Gods—*θεοῖς κατὰχθονίοις*—in their behalf, sufficiently attest their belief in a middle state. The authority of Virgil puts the question beyond a doubt, with regard to the Romans. In his descent into hell, Æneas meets the shade of Palinurus wandering upon the wrong bank of the Styx, and in the company of those other spirits of the dead, who are thus described by the Latin poet ;

Hæc omnis, quam cernis, inops inhumataque turba est ;  
 Portitor ille, Charon ; hi, quos vehit unda, sepulti.  
 Nec ripas datur horrendas et rauca fluenta  
 Transportare prius, quam sedibus ossa quierunt.

Church, the book of Machabees to be divinely inspired scripture ; or, erroneously, like Protestants,

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Centum errant annos, volitantque hæc litora circum  
Tum demum admissi stagna exoptata revisunt,

*Æneid, lib. vi. 325.*

The ghosts rejected are th'unhappy crew  
Deprived of sepulchres and fun'ral due :  
The boatman, Charon : those, the buried host  
He ferries over to the farther coast ;  
Nor dares his transport vessel cross the waves  
With such whose bones are not composed in graves.  
A hundred years they wander on the shore ;  
At length their penance done, are wafted o'er.

*Dryden.*

Continuing his progress, the Trojan chief afterwards encounters the shade of his own father Anchises, from whom he receives the following description ;—

Quin et supremo quum lumine vita reliquit,  
Non tamen omne, malum miseris, nec funditus omnes  
Corporeæ excedunt pestes ; penitusque necesse est,  
Multa diu concreta modis inolescere miris.  
Ergo exercentur pœnis, veterumque malorum  
Supplicia expendunt. Aliæ panduntur inanes  
Suspensæ ad ventos ; aliis sub gurgite vasto  
Infectum eluitur scelus, aut exuritur igni.  
Quisque suos, patimur, Manes , exinde per amplum  
Mittimur Elysium, et pauci læta arva tenemus :  
Donec longa dies, perfecto temporis orbe,  
Concretam exemit labem, purumque reliquit  
Ætherium sensum, atque aurai simplicis ignem.  
Has omnes, ubi mille rotam volvere per annos,  
Lethæum ad fluvium deus evocat agmine magno :  
Scilicet inmemores, supera ut convexa revisant,  
Rursus, et incipiant in corpora velle reverti.

Nor death itself can wholly wash their stains,  
But long contracted filth e'en in the soul remains.

attach no other importance to it, than to any other

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The relics of inveterate vice they wear ;  
 And spots of sin obscene in ev'ry face appear.  
 For this are various penances enjoin'd ;  
 And some are hung to bleach upon the wind,  
 Some plunged in waters, others purged in fires,  
 Till all the dregs are drain'd, and all the rust expires.  
 All have their manes, and those manes bear :  
 The few, so cleansed, to these abodes repair,  
 And breathe, in ample fields, the soft Elysian air.  
 Then are they happy, when, by length of time,  
 The scurf is worn away of each committed crime ;  
 No speck is left of their habitual stains ;  
 But the pure ether of the soul remains.  
 But when a thousand rolling years are past,  
 (So long their punishments and penance last)  
 Whole droves of minds are, by the driving god,  
 Compell'd to drink the deep Lethean flood,  
 In large forgetful draughts to steep the cares  
 Of their past labours and their irksome years ;  
 That, unrememb'ring of its former pain,  
 The soul may suffer mortal flesh again.

St. Justin Martyr, in the second part of his '*Exhortation to the Greeks*,' demonstrates that many of the Greek authors had borrowed from the Jewish writings those few correct ideas they possessed concerning divine subjects ; and that both Homer and Plato had drawn copiously from the same fountain ; and how much the Greeks in general were indebted to the Hebrew people for much of their wisdom and information, is exposed, in an able manner, by St. Clement of Alexandria, (A.D. 194) in that valuable work of his, entitled '*Stromata, or The Miscellany*.' *Lib. v.* We must therefore, admit, it was originally from the chosen people of God, that the Greeks, and Romans, who borrowed their theogony and religion from Greece, came to the knowledge of this divinely revealed

historical narration ; this fact, in either case, is irrefragably established by its authority.\*

#### VIII.—EVIDENCED BY THE NEW TESTAMENT.

But this truth is copiously attested by the New Testament. Our divine Redeemer raised to life the daughter of Jairus,† as well as the son of the widow of Naim ;‡ and called Lazarus, though four days buried, from the sepulchre : and when He himself yielded up the ghost, many bodies of the saints, that had slept, arose, and coming ‘ out of the tombs after his resurrection, came into the holy city and appeared to many.’§

Now it is positively certain that no one had ever entered heaven previously to the ascension of our blessed Redeemer, who told Nicodemus, ‘ No man

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doctrine of a middle state after death, which they, however, corrupted, by amalgamating with it their own ridiculous fables and superstitions. That the Druids taught the doctrine of a transmigration of souls, appears from the remarks of Cæsar, (*De Bello Gallico*, lib. vi.) and of Diodorus ; (*lib. v. c. 28*) and from the authority of other ancient writers, it would seem that they believed in the existence of a species of middle state. (*Strabo*, lib. iv. *Mela*, lib. iii. c. 2, *Val. Maximus*.)

\* This argument, furnished by the second book of Machabees, will be more amply developed in two succeeding paragraphs.

† *St. Matt.* ix.

‡ *St. Luke* vii.

§ *St. Matt. C. xxvii. V. 52, 53.*

hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended from heaven, the Son of man, who is in heaven.\* Where, therefore, had been dwelling the souls of these individuals, in the interval between their departure from the flesh, until they were recalled to animate and tenant it again? In what place had been the sojourn where Moses and Elias had enjoyed repose, until they were summoned to appear to Peter, James, and John, talking to our Saviour Jesus as he was transfigured before those favourite disciples on the mountain?† Certainly not in the Hell of the damned; for, from that empire of Satan there is no redemption,—its sentence is irrevocable, as its torments are eternal: most certainly not in heaven; since, before his ascension, Christ himself assures us that no one had ever entered there.

But in the supposition that the souls of the just *could* have entered heaven, before the gates, which Adam's sin had closed against the human race, had been thrown open by our divine Redeemer; it would have been a punishment instead of a kindness to have called them from that happy region. We are, therefore, warranted to conclude, that the soul of Lazarus, for example, had not been conveyed to heaven, nor had lingered in hell; for the justice of God would have prohibited him to reverse the final sentence of punishment, in one in-

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\* *St. John*, C. iii. V. 13.      † *St. Matt.* C. xv. V. 3.

stance; and in the other, his mercy would have forbidden him to have recalled a soul from perfect bliss, to involve it again in this world's miseries.

Some amongst the parables employed by Christ necessarily presuppose that a belief in a middle state was unexceptionably admitted by the Jews, to whom they were directed.

It was thus that the voice of Truth itself addressed the multitude upon the Mount;—‘ Be at agreement with thy adversary betimes, whilst thou art in the way with him: lest perhaps the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Amen I say to thee, thou shalt not go out from thence till thou repay the last farthing :’\* a passage which the ancient Fathers of the Church† interpret concerning Purgatory, the prison of those souls defiled with sin, and which are there detained until they have been purified through the blood of Jesus, from the very smallest stain. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus clearly establishes the ancient belief in a middle state.—‘ And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by angels into Abraham’s bosom. And the rich man also died, and he was buried in Hell. And lifting

\* *St. Matt. C. v. V. 25, 26.*

† Tertullianus, *de Anima*, c. 17. Cyprianus, *lib. iv. Epist.* 2. Origenes, *Hom.* 35, in *Lucam.* Hieronymus, in *Cap. 5. Matt.*



up his eyes when he was in torments, he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried, and said : Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. And Abraham said to him : Son, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy life-time, and likewise Lazarus evil things : but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is fixed a great chaos : so that they, who would pass from hence to you, cannot, nor from thence come hither.\* Lazarus does not repose on the breast of an angel in heaven, but on the bosom of Abraham, who had not as yet entered into that celestial kingdom ; but was resting in a place, so near the hell of the damned, that though there is a great chaos fixed between them, the rich man may be discerned, and his prayer is capable of being heard by Abraham. But what is the purport of this rich man's supplication ? Not that he himself be sent, for that was impossible, but Lazarus, to his father's house, to warn his brethren against the flames of hell. This belief amongst God's ancient people, of a middle state, is still further corroborated by the words addressed by the thief upon the cross to our divine Redeemer, and also by the answer given to them by those lips of truth. It was thus

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\* *St. Luke, C. xvi. V. 22-26.*

the repentant malefactor prayed ;—‘ Lord, remember me, when thou shalt come into thy kingdom.’\* This suppliant was just about to expire, so was Jesus ; yet he does not say, grant me to go along with thee into thy kingdom ; no, his petition is, to follow our Lord, at some future period, into that blessed country : ‘ remember me,’ he cries, ‘ when thou shalt come into thy kingdom.’ The good thief consequently believed that, while death would convey our blessed Saviour to the glory of his kingdom, it must carry a sinner like himself not to such beatitude, but to some other place—not heaven, and yet not hell : not heaven, because although he awaited a place different from the kingdom of his Lord—yet it was to be a place of such a nature, that his Lord, when enthroned in glory, might have compassion on him :—but the souls in heaven cannot be commiserated, they do not stand in need of mercy : not hell, because neither hope, —nor grace,—nor pity, can ever enter there. Our divine Redeemer answered this petition, by this assurance to the thief ;—‘ This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.’† But where is this paradise into which the thief is to have an entrance together with his Saviour ? Is it heaven ? No ; for neither that day, nor three days later, had Jesus ascended into heaven : for the reason which he assigns to Mary Magdalen, why she should not

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\* *St. Luke, C. xxiii. V. 43.*

† *Ibid.*

touch him when she saw him, after his resurrection, in the garden, was ;✕‘ Mary do not touch me, for I am not *as yet* ascended to my Father :’\* ✕  
That the place to which the thief was transported along with Christ, was not hell, is certain ; for hell is not a paradise, a place of pleasure.

St. Peter, however, will inform us where this place was to which the good thief accompanied our Saviour. ‘ Christ,’ writes that Prince of the Apostles, ‘ Christ....being put to death indeed in the flesh, but enlivened in the spirit. In which also coming, he preached to those spirits that were in prison ; which had been sometime incredulous, when they waited for the patience of God in the days of Noe.’† An admirable elucidation of this point is furnished by the Catechism of the Council of Trent, which observes ;—“ That the Son of God descended into hell ; that, clothed with the spoils of the arch-enemy, he might conduct into heaven those holy Fathers, and the other just souls, whose liberation from prison he had already purchased. This he accomplished in an admirable and glorious manner, for his august presence at once shed a celestial lustre upon the captives ; filled them with inconceivable joy ; and imparted to them that supreme happiness which consists in the vision of God ; thus verifying his promise to the thief on the cross ;—‘ Amen, I say to thee, this day thou

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\* *St. John, C. xx. V. 17.* † *St. Peter, C. iii. V. 18-20.*

shalt be with me in paradise.' This deliverance of the just was long before predicted by Osee in these words ;—' O death ! I will be thy death ; O Hell ! I will be thy bite :'\* and also by the prophet Zachary ;—' Thou also, by the blood of thy testament, hast sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water :† and, lastly, the same is expressed by the Apostle in these words ;—' Despoiling the principalities and powers, he hath exposed them confidently, openly triumphing over them in himself."‡

' However to comprehend still more clearly the efficacy of this mystery, we should frequently call to mind, that not only those who were born after the coming of our Saviour, but, also those, who preceded that event, from the days of Adam, or shall succeed it to the consummation of time, are included in the redemption purchased by the death of Christ. Before his death and resurrection, heaven was closed against every child of Adam : the souls of the just, on their departure from this life, were borne to the bosom of Abraham ; or, as is still the case with those who require to be freed from the stains of sin, or die indebted to the divine justice, were purified in the fire of purgatory.'§

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\* *Osee* or *Hosea*, C. xiii. V. 14.    † *Zach.* C. ix. V. 11.

‡ *Col.* C. ii. V. 15.

§ *Catech. Council of Trent*, pp. 60, 61, translated by the Rev. J. O'Donovan.

SECTION II.

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## IX.—THIS MIDDLE STATE PROVED TO BE A PLACE OF PUNISHMENT, OR PURGATORY.

So far, a belief in a middle state between heaven and hell, has been contended for, and clearly demonstrated. That this middle state was not merely the abode into which the souls of the just, who died before Christ, were received; and where, without experiencing any sort of pain, they enjoyed peaceful repose; but that it still continues to exist, and is a place of punishment where the souls of those, who die before they have discharged the debt of temporal pain to be inflicted on them for sins, which were either venial, or of which the eternal chastisement had been remitted, is a doctrine corroborated by the holy scriptures, and attested by the Church in every age of her existence.

Our blessed Saviour most significantly points to such a dogma on several occasions.

The passage in the sermon on the Mount;—  
'Be at agreement with thy adversary betimes, whilst thou art in the way with him, lest perhaps the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Amen I say to thee, thou shalt not

go out from thence till thou repay the last farthing,\*—which we have already mentioned, is most naturally construed as affirmative of Purgatory, that prison of the soul, in which she is detained a captive, by the angel-ministers of justice, by order of the judge Christ Jesus, until she shall have repaid the last farthing; that is, made atonement for the very smallest sin, to the anger of a violated Gospel, so irritated by her transgressions, as to become her adversary; and whom she had neglected to propitiate through the merits of her Saviour, whilst she was still in the way upon her earthly pilgrimage.

But the words of our Redeemer, whilst reprehending the malice of the stubborn Pharisees, who so obstinately withstood his preaching, are much less exposed to an ambiguous interpretation. They announce that—‘ Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but he that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him neither in this world, nor in the world to come.’† From such a declaration, we conclude that there are *some* sins forgiven in

\* *St. Matt. C. v. V. 25, 26.*

† *St. Matt. C. xii. V. 32.* From these words, St. Augustine (*De Civ. lib. xxi. c. 13*) and St. Gregory (*Dialog. lib. iv. c. 39*) gather, that some sins may be remitted in the world to come: and consequently that there is a purgatory or middle place.

the world to come; otherwise the expression of our Saviour would be devoid of meaning, and his denunciation superfluous and impotent. As, however, the guilt and eternal punishment of sin, cannot be pardoned in a future life; it is its temporal punishment only that can be forgiven there. This sentence, therefore, of our Saviour, triumphantly evinces not only the existence of a middle state, but proves that there are souls abiding there, defiled with sin; and are, in consequence, liable to punishment which can be, and is, remitted by a just but clement judge.

It was thus that St. Peter, immediately after being filled with the Holy Ghost, addressed the citizens of Jerusalem:—‘Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth....whom God hath raised up, having loosed the sorrows of hell, as it was impossible that he should be holden by it. For David saith concerning him.....*Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell*, nor suffer thy holy one to see corruption.’\* In the Protestant version it is: ‘having loosed the pains of death.’ But it should be observed, that the ‘Infernus,’ or hell of the Vulgate, not only is authorized by several Greek manuscripts, which read *αδης* instead of *θανάτος*, but that such a reading is more accordant with the citation which the apostle afterwards produces from the psalmist. The sorrows or pains

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\* *Acts*, C. ii. V. 22, &c.

which St. Peter here refers to, cannot be those of death, properly so understood ; since Christ had endured such pains, in all their most excruciating rigour, on the cross ; nor those of the grave, since the body of Jesus, deposited in the sepulchre, and separated from his soul, was incapable of suffering ; nor those of the damned, since Jesus Christ never merited them, and it would be ridiculous to say, that God had ever delivered or preserved him from those tortures. We are, therefore, compelled to understand, by these sorrows, the pains which are endured by souls neither in heaven nor in hell, but in an intermediate state between those places. Our Redeemer did not endure these afflictions ; on the contrary, he afforded, by his divine presence, consolation to the souls of those who were detained or suffering in this hell of purgation, and he assured them of their approaching deliverance.

The doctrine of Purgatory, though incidentally noticed by St. Paul, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, is, nevertheless, insisted on by that apostle of the Gentiles in the most explicit manner, in the following words :—‘ For other foundation no man can lay, but that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus. Now if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man’s work shall be manifest : for the day of the Lord shall declare it, because it shall be revealed in fire : AND THE FIRE SHALL TRY EVERY MAN’S WORK, of what sort it is. If any man’s



work abide, which he hath built thereupon; he shall receive a reward. If any man's work burn, he shall suffer loss, but HE HIMSELF SHALL BE SAVED, YET SO AS BY FIRE.\*

It would be impossible to offer a more satisfactory or more lucid comment on this passage of St. Paul, than the one which is furnished by two illustrious fathers of the Church, Origen and St. Augustin. It is now more than fifteen hundred years ago, since the learned Catechist of Alexandria† thus observed:—‘Sin, in its nature, is like to that matter, which fire consumes, and which the apostle says is built up by sinners, who, upon the foundation of Christ, build wood, hay, and stubble, which words manifestly show, that there are some sins so light, as to be compared to stubble, in which when fire is set, it cannot dwell long; that there are others like to hay, which the fire easily consumes, but a little more slowly than it does stubble; and others resemble wood, in which, according to the degree of criminality, the fire finds an abundant substance on which to feed. Thus each crime, in proportion to its character, experiences a just degree of punishment.’‡

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\* 1 Cor. C. iii. V. 11-15.

† Origen succeeded St. Clement of Alexandria, as Catechist in that celebrated city, and died about the year 254.

‡ *Homil. xiv. in Levit. t. ii. p. 259.*

‘When we depart this life, if we take with us virtues or vices, shall we receive rewards for our virtues, and those trespasses be forgiven to us which we knowingly committed ; or shall we be punished for our faults, and not receive the rewards of our virtue? Neither is true : because we shall suffer for our sins, and receive the rewards of our good actions. For if on the foundation of Christ you shall have built, not only gold and silver and precious stones, but also wood, and hay, and stubble, what do you expect, when the soul shall be separated from the body? Would you enter into heaven with your wood, and hay, and stubble, to defile the kingdom of God : or, on account of these encumbrances, remain without, and receive no reward for your gold, and silver, and precious stones? Neither is this just. It remains, then, that you be committed to the fire, which shall consume the light materials ; for our God, to those who can comprehend heavenly things, is called a CONSUMING FIRE. But this fire consumes not the creature, but what the creature has himself built, wood, and hay, and stubble. It is manifest, that, in the first place, the fire destroys the wood of our transgressions, and then returns to us the reward of our good works.’\*

Two centuries later, the illustrious St. Augustin thus exclaimed :—‘Cleanse me so, O Lord, in

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\* *Homil. xvi. ad xii. in Jerem. t. iii. p. 231, 232.*

this life, make me such, that I may not stand in need of that purifying fire, designed for those who shall *be saved, yet so as by fire*. And why, but because, (as the apostle says) they have built upon the *foundation wood, hay, and stubble*? If they had built *gold, and silver, and precious stones*, they would be secured from both fires; not only from that in which the wicked shall be punished for ever; but likewise from that fire, which will purify those who shall be saved by fire.\* But because it is said, *he shall be saved*, that fire is thought lightly of; though the suffering will be more grievous than any thing man can undergo in this life.†

The reader's attention must be again directed to a passage in the letters of St. Peter, which has been already cited. The prince of the apostles thus remarks of Christ:—'Being put to death indeed in the flesh, but enlivened in the spirit. In which also coming, he preached to those spirits that were in prison: which had been sometime incredulous, when they waited for the patience of God in the days of Noe, when the ark was a building: wherein a few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water.'‡ From this text it appears certain:

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\* Sed etiam de illo qui emendabit eos qui per ignem salvi erunt.

† *Enarrat. in Psal. xxxvii. t. iv. p. 295.*

‡ 1 *Peter, C. iii. V. 18-20.*

—I. That even *after* Christ had suffered for sins, and had already paid the price of his precious blood for the ransom of all mankind, still there were some souls, to whom the merits of their Redeemer's all-sufficient sacrifice upon the cross, had not as yet been applied; and who were in an actual state of suffering in PRISON, in the other world.—II. That such souls were neither in heaven nor in hell; because heaven is not a PRISON; a place of punishment, where those who are held in captivity, can be corrected and improved by *preaching*; and because it is absurd to imagine that Christ's soul would have gone down amongst those wicked spirits, who are damned for all eternity, or that he would have *preached* to Satan and his demons, since the object of preaching is reformation and improvement; neither of which can ever be effected amongst devils.

Another argument in attestation of the Catholic dogma of a middle state of punishment, may be deduced from the second book of Machabees:—  
 ‘The valiant Judas, making a gathering, sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem, for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection.....It is therefore a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins.’\*

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\* 2 Mach. C. xii. V. 43-46. The canonicity of this book is shown in Appendix III.

From this passage we gather ; first, that more than a century and a half before the coming of our Saviour, the custom of praying for the dead prevailed amongst the Jews : secondly, that such a custom was not peculiar to an individual sect amongst the Jews, but was practised by the whole nation, since it was observed by the priesthood as well as by the people ; a particular sacrifice was appointed for the purpose ; and the Temple at Jerusalem was often made to witness its solemnization. Thirdly, that this sacrifice, and these supplications for the departed, were expiatory ; since the purport of them was, that *the dead might be loosed from their sins* ;\* and, therefore, the souls of those individuals for whom they were offered, were regarded by the Jewish people not to be in Abraham's bosom, where nothing defiled could be admitted ; much less in hell, which was irrevocably barred against hope and pardon ; but to be in a state of painful suffering.

X.—NEGATIVE PROOF OF PURGATORY.

Hitherto we have considered the positive proofs only, which establish with such precision the dogma of Purgatory ; we should, however, notice a negative one, which is equally conclusive. Our Saviour and his apostles frequently censured, in

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\* 2 Mach. C. xii. V. 46.

the most energetic and unmeasured language, many practices of the Jews, which they knew to be erroneous, or deemed particularly worthy of reproof. Now, considering the books of Machabees, not as inspired Scripture, but as mere history, we must believe that public prayer and sacrifice for the dead were acts of piety in constant use amongst the Hebrew people.\*

If, therefore, such a custom had not been orthodox, but blame-worthy, our Lord would have denounced it as an innovation of the Jewish priesthood, whose disorders he reprov'd with so much freedom and indignant eloquence ; and would have stigmatized the ministers of the Temple for such an invention to gratify their avarice ; and the apostles would have been sedulous in exhorting each proselyte from the synagogue to abandon such a usage : instead of this, however, our Lord and his apostles permit the Jews to follow their ancient devotion of praying for the dead, and thus authorized the practice, by affording it their tacit approbation.

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\* Josephus vouches for the belief, which was held at his day by the Jews, who, as he assures us, (*Wars of the Jews*, C. 91) would not pray for those amongst their brethren who committed suicide. The exception proves that they prayed for those who had died by any other kind of death.

**XI.—PURGATORY CONSONANT TO SEVERAL EXPRESSIONS  
OF SCRIPTURE.**

Several indirect arguments may be produced in favour of the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory. Our Lord assures us, that “of every idle word, man shall render an account at the day of judgment.”\*

Every idle word, however, cannot subject men to *everlasting* punishment: Christ himself has distinguished the various degrees of culpability contained in certain expressions, and apportioned the corresponding intensity of punishment to be inflicted upon those who utter any of them.—‘Whosoever,’ says our Saviour, ‘is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment. And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council. And whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire.’† There must, consequently, be some smaller pain to suffer, after the particular judgment which takes place immediately after death.‡

St. Paul assures us, that every man shall receive

\* *St. Matt. C. xii. V. 36.*

† *Ibid. C. v. V. 22.*

‡ Immediately after death, the damned are buried in hell, as appears from the example of the rich glutton, in *St. Luke, C. xvi.*; and to the just is awarded future happiness, as we see in the good thief, to whom it was said; ‘This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.’—*St. Luke, 23, 24.* It is impossible to conceive how rewards and punishments can be assigned without judgment.

reward according to his own labour; and he warns us not to be 'deceived, for God is not mocked. For what things a man shall sow, those also shall he reap.\* But we are told by scripture that no one lives without some kind of sinfulness either of omission or commission; for there is no man that sinneth not:† and 'if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.‡ While, therefore, it is certain that no one lives without sin: at the same time, it cannot possibly be doubted, that many, even of the most faithful servants of God, depart this life before they have cleansed away all their sins of thought, word, and deed, in the blood of the Lamb. How often does death go wandering through the world to snatch his prey, with such a silent tread, and casting before him no shadow of his approach; that he sometimes steals upon his unsuspecting victims, and without one notice or a moment's preparation, beckons them away from amid the feast, and sound of mirth and revelry. Now, let us suppose that some practically good man, is surprised, by apoplexy for instance, and that he dies with some little stain of sin upon his soul—guilty of some idle word, some trifling unrepented fault; his soul must be purified from such a speck, how-

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\* *Gal. C. vi. V. 7, 8.*

† 3 *Kings, C. viii. V. 46.* (Prot. version, 1 *Kings, &c.*)

‡ 1 *St. John, C. i. V. 8.*



ever faint and trivial, *before* it can be admitted into heaven, since—‘ There shall not enter into it any thing defiled ;’\* but where? Not in hell certainly ; therefore in some place *between* heaven and hell. This place in which sin is cleansed away—this state in which the soul is purified from this world’s dross, and rendered fit for heaven, is what Catholics properly denominate PURGATORY.

#### XII.—PURGATORY TAUGHT BY THE APOSTLES’ CREED.

The substance of this doctrine so conspicuously contained in the holy scriptures, is likewise embodied in that epitome of Christianity, which was drawn up by the Apostles, and attests by its appellation that it was their creed. This document of apostolic faith expressly calls upon us to believe that our Saviour ‘ descended into hell.’ Can what is here denominated ‘ hell ’ be interpreted the ‘ grave ?’ No, certainly ; for, just before, we are taught that our Redeemer died and was *buried*, that is, put into the grave—something different from the grave is therefore signified by this expression. It cannot be the hell of the damned, which is here indicated ; for while our reverence for Christ prohibits us from thinking that his spotless soul would take up its abode with Satan and his accursed spirits, our piety, instructed by the words of St. Peter,† will bid us consider the ‘ hell ’

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\* *Rev. C. xxi. V. 27.*

† *1 Peter, C. iii. V. 18-20.*

of which the Apostles speak here, as the prison of the spirits, who had been sometime incredulous, and to whom Christ went, in order to improve such as were in a state of purification, by his preaching; and to comfort those others who were waiting for him to carry them to heaven; but, in the interim, were enjoying the repose of Abraham's bosom. This 'hell' mentioned by the Apostles was, at the same time, a purgatory for some, and a paradise for others, and for the good thief amongst the rest, Christ not having as yet ascended into heaven.

**XIII.—THE DOCTRINE OF PURGATORY ATTESTED BY THE CHURCH IN EVERY AGE.**

A more definite exposition of the doctrine delivered by the Apostles on this article of faith, may be readily procured, by consulting the records of those Churches which they founded; and by interrogating those venerable pastors, who succeeded those Apostles as depositaries of the faith of Jesus, and in the office of publicly explaining it. The ancient liturgies are so many faithful registers of the doctrine taught by those who framed them. But it is universally admitted by the learned, that, though the present may vary in some unimportant points from the original form of the liturgies, the substance and materials out of which they are constructed, are identically the same as those furnished by the Apostles. Now all the ancient liturgies, as well as that which is used at this day

by the Church of Rome, unanimously attest the doctrine of Purgatory ; since in each of them a particular remembrance is made for the souls of departed brethren.\*

The limits of this work are too narrow to admit the insertion of those numerous citations, which might be extracted from the writings of the Fathers in support of Purgatory ; and the reader, who may feel inquisitive on this subject, is referred to a work designedly composed to exhibit a well connected series of ancient testimonies in confirmation of the various points of Catholic doctrine.†

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\* Extracts from the liturgies of the Greek and Oriental Churches, are given in Chapter xv. on the Dyptics, No. 6. The actual accordance of the Greeks, whether schismatical or orthodox, with the Latins on this point of faith, is demonstrated in the most lucid manner, by Leo Allatius, in his very able work, entitled, *De Utriusque Ecclesiae Occid. atque Orient. perpetua in dogmate de Purgatorio consensione.*

† See 'the Faith of Catholics.'

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## SECTION III.

XIV.—THE PRAYERS OF THE LIVING ARE SERVICEABLE  
TO THE DEAD.

HAVING established the existence of Purgatory, that is, the existence of a third place, or state in which the souls of those, who are guilty of smaller sins, called venial; or remaining under the sentence of some temporal punishment unatoned for, are detained in order to be purified for heaven; it will be admitted as a necessary consequence, by every reasonable man, that it is lawful, nay, as far as charity can bind us—an obligation to offer up our prayers for the souls of the departed. The Apostle of the Gentiles tells us that;—‘We being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another;’\*—and that God hath tempered the body together.....that the members might be mutually careful one of another.† The figure which St. Paul employs, is as beautiful as it is expressive. He paints to us the Church under the semblance of a body, the head of which is Christ, and its members all the faithful. These members are finally united to their head and linked among

\* *Rom. C. xii. V. 5.*† *1 Cor. C. xii. V. 24, 25.*

themselves, by the Holy Spirit—by faith—by the sacraments—by prayer, and by the holy ministry, which, like the joints and arteries of the human frame, serve to connect them with Christ, and with one another; as well as to convey nourishment and influence from the head to every individual member of this spiritual, and mystic body. But we, who are still in this life, as well as those who are detained in Purgatory, continue to be fellow-members of one same body, the Church, since we both adhere to Christ, the head of that mystic body, and are united through him by a common link of charity. This union requires that we render one another mutual assistance when necessary. Such a duty, however, can never be more binding, than in the case of those, who are lingering in Purgatory, and breathe such ardent sighs to gain the beatific presence of the Godhead. After this argument deduced from the words of St. Paul, it will be unnecessary to insist upon the performance of an office, which is so expressly recommended, at the same time that it is taught by the Apostles, in that portion of their creed, which instructs us to believe in a ‘communion of saints.’

#### XV.—ANTIQUITY OF PRAYER FOR THE DEAD.

The antiquity of the custom of praying for the dead, is sufficiently attested by the passage in the 2nd book of Machabees, to which we have more

than once referred, and from which we gather that the 'valiant Judas, making a gathering, sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem, for sacrifice to be *offered for the sins* of the dead;—concluding that 'it is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins.'\*

XVI.—STILL PRACTISED AMONGST THE JEWS.

An act of religious piety which was exercised amongst the Jews two thousand years ago, is still practised by them, as may be ascertained by examining their manuals of prayer, in which they are instructed to offer up supplications for the repose of their departed brethren.

In the Hebrew-Spanish ritual, which is in more general use in the synagogues, and holds amongst the Jews the same rank as the Roman ritual does amongst Catholics, it is appointed that at funerals, there shall be recited for the deceased a particular form of prayer, part of which is as follows;—'Have pity on him, O Lord, living God, master of the world, with whom there is the source of life, that he may always walk in the way of life, and that his soul may repose amongst those elected unto life eternal. May the merciful God according to the extent of his mercy, pardon him his iniquities;

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\* 2 *Mach. C.* xii. *V.* 43-46.

may his good works be before his eyes, and may he be admitted into his presence amongst the number of the faithful; may he walk in his presence in the regions of life.' To this succeeds another supplication in behalf of the departed, who is thus feelingly addressed;—' May the gates of heaven be thrown open to you; may you be given to behold the city of peace, and the tabernacles of security; may the angels of peace hasten with joy unto you; may the high-priest receive and conduct you; may your soul go to the double cave of Abraham, and hence upon the cherubim, and hence to Eden's garden; may the angel Michael open to you the gates of the sanctuary; may he present your soul as an oblation unto God; and may the angel-redeemer accompany you to the portals of the delightful places where dwell the Israelites.' All the other prayers which compose the office of interment, and which the Jews denominate '*Seder Abelut*' or the 'order of mourning,' abound with similar expressions.\*

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\* In the Talmudical treatise on Benedictions, chap. iii. purgatory or a middle state of purification is especially mentioned by the rabbins, who say that;—' The soul does not immediately go to heaven on its separation from the body, but remains wandering about this world during the space of twelve months, at the expiration of which, it returns to the grave. It endures, however, much torment

XVII.—PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD IN USE IN THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH, PROVED FROM ANCIENT INSCRIPTIONS.

From this short notice on the ancient, as well as modern custom amongst the Jews, of making

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in purgatory : at length, at the end of twelve months, it enters into heaven where it enjoys repose.

Although the Jews, like the Catholics, admit, first, that there is a middle state for souls after this life ; secondly, that the spirits there undergo a temporary punishment for sins committed in this world, are, in fine, purified for heaven ; and thirdly, that the prayers of the living may be offered for the dead, still the ideas of the Hebrews concerning minor particulars belonging to this middle state, are fanciful, and differ, very widely, from the more received opinions of the Christian Church. The Jews believe that almost every Israelite must go to purgatory, and pass at least a year there ; that when this period has transpired, the soul, and, in the estimation of some, together with the body also, is conveyed through subterraneous channels to the land of Israel, whence it takes its flight to the paradise of Eden. It was asserted by the rabbi Eliezer, whose opinion is put down in the Talmud, that every Israelite had a part in the world to come ; only the excommunicated and such as die burdened with crime, are excluded. As the Jews believe that all who depart this life in communion with the synagogue, are saved ; many individuals are thus supposed to pass through purgatory. A tradition prevails amongst them of a certain pain inflicted after death by an angel, who comes to the tomb, and lashes the deceased three several times with a bright red iron chain. To be spared the infliction of this punish-



prayer for the dead, we will now proceed to a review of certain monuments of Christian antiquity, which exhibit in such a convincing manner the pious solicitude displayed by the true believers in Jesus, from the earliest ages of the faith, to comply with that divine precept of extending our fraternal charity beyond the grave, and of praying for the souls of our departed brethren.

In excavating the Roman catacombs, many very interesting Christian inscriptions have been discovered. Amongst them are several in which peace, and rest, and benediction, are beautifully implored, in a pious prayer of few but touching words, on the soul of him or her over whose sepulchre it was inscribed.\*

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ment, forms a specific petition in their mortuary prayers. (*Œuvres de Bossuet, t. xlii. p. 615, &c. à Versailles, 1819.*)

Leo Allatius observes that the Jews pray and give alms for the dead, not only on the day of the funeral and the Sabbaths, but more particularly on the tenth moon of September, when a solemn service is performed, and much is bestowed in charity in suffrage of the souls of the departed. The same author produces copious extracts, in the original Hebrew, of the prayers used on these occasions.—*De utriusque Eccl. Orient. atque Occid. de Purgatorio consensione, p. 913.*

\* Strolling round the Certosa or public cemetery of Bologna, Byron read and was sensibly affected by the following sepulchral inscriptions;—‘Martini Luigi im-

From a great number of the sepulchral inscriptions traced by the hands of the Christians in the first ages, a few only have been presented to the reader's notice. They will, however, abundantly suffice to convince him that the Church of Christ, at the epoch of its very infancy, taught her members, as she teaches them at present, to offer up their prayers for the dead.

\*.EXUPERIUS RE.Q.  
IN PACE Q.V.  
ANN.XXIII ET  
M. III. D. VI


EXUPERI *Requiescas*  
IN PACE *qui vixit,*  
ANNOS XXIII. ET  
Menses III. Dies VI.

*Mayst thou rest in peace, O Exuperius! who lived XXIII years,  
III months, and VI days.\**

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plora pace;’—‘Lucrezia Picini implora eterna quiete.’ ‘These words,’ says the poet, ‘contain doubt, hope, and humility; can any thing be more full of pathos? There is all the helplessness and humble hope, and death-like prayer that can arise from the grave—implora pace.’—*Moore’s Life of Byron, Vol. II, pp. 216, 218.*

\* This inscription was extracted from that part of the catacombs denominated the cemetery of Callistus, and may be seen in *Buonarruoti, Vasi antichi di Vetro, p. 165.*

Q VALE SABINA  
 VIXIT ANNOS VIII MENSIBVS  
 VIII DIEBVS XXII   
 VIVAS IN DEO DULCIS

VALE SABINA  
 VIXIT ANNOS VIII. MENSIBVS VIII.  
 DIES XXII.  
 VIVAS IN DEO DULCIS.

*Farewell, O Sabina! she lived VIII years, VIII months, XXII days.  
 Mayst thou live sweet in God.\**

IN PACE ET BENEDICTIONE  
 SVFSVATE VIXIT ANIS XXXPLVS MINVS  
 REDDIDIT XAL FEBR.

*Mayst thou be in peace and benediction, O Sufsuatus! He lived  
 thirty years more or less. He departed in the Kalends of February.†*

\* This was found in the cemetery of Callistus, see *Buonarruoti's Vasi antichi di Vetro*, p. 166. The dove was a favourite symbol with the primitive believers. It perpetually occurs in the fresco-paintings, inscriptions, and other graphic and pictorial monuments of Christian antiquity. The early Fathers, Tertullian, St. Clement, and St. Cyprian, constantly refer to it; and no hieroglyphic was considered more appropriate for the Christian's sepulchre than the emblematic dove with its olive-bough of peace. An inspection of the learned works of Aringhi, Boldetti, Buonarruoti, and Bottari, will richly repay the reader who may feel any curiosity on this subject.

† From the same cemetery, *ibid.* p. 165.

DOMITI  
IN PACE  
LEA FECIT

DOMITI  
IN PACE  
LEA FECIT.

*O Domitius! mayst thou be in peace. Lea did this.\**

ΑΦΘΟΝΑ ΕΝ ΘΕΩ ΖΗ  
ΧΗ

*Aphthona! mayst thou live in God.†*

ROXANE  
D. B. QVES  
QVAS.

ROXANE  
*Dulcis. Bene QUIES*  
QVAS.

*O sweet Roxanus! mayst thou rest well.‡*

\* The above was inscribed in red letters, and is copied from the original, found in the cemetery of Callistus.—*Ibid.* p. 164.

† On the word Ζησης, the learned reader may consult Buonarruoti, ‘*Vasi antichi di Vetro*,’ for some interesting observations on this Greek formula of wishing happiness, p. 203 *et seq.*—*Ibid.* p. 166.

‡ This inscription was engraved on a cornelian ring. To those who have studied Greek and Roman antiquities, it is well known that, anciently, it was the custom to bury with the deceased a variety of ornaments. This ring was, no doubt, one of those funeral objects consigned to the sepulchre together with a corpse of some Roman christian, that it might not only announce him to have been a member of the faith, but at the same time exhibit

LEA BENE CESQVAS.

LEA BENE *quiescas*.*O Lea ! mayst thou rest in peace.\**

The following are some other sepulchral inscriptions, that contain a prayer for the dead :—

DOMINA DVLCISSIMA  
STFRCORIA FILIA QVI  
BIXIT AN. II. MENS. III. IN  
PACE DOMINI DORMIAS.

*Boldetti, p. 418.*


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a proof that his surviving friends cherished the remembrance of him, by their prayers for his departed spirit. To what was an unmeaning gentile custom, was thus imparted a christian and an edifying meaning. St. Clement of Alexandria, who flourished towards the decline of the second century, (A.D. 194) in one of his works, called the '*Pedagogue*,' (*Lib. iii. C. 11*) recommends the Christians of his day, to have the rings they wore 'engraved, not with the images of idols, and of utensils which contribute to sin or intemperance, but with a dove, a fish, a ship under sail, a lyre, or an anchor.' All these were Christian hieroglyphics,—symbols of Jesus Christ and his gospel, and of a future life in happiness. Rings, bearing those various emblems, have been found in the graves of the catacombs, and may be seen engraved in Boldetti (*Osservazioni sopra i Cimiterii, p. 502.*) Aringhi has dedicated the greater part of the sixth book of his '*Roma Subterranea*' to the elucidation of these and other symbolical figures introduced into the fresco-paintings, and other works of art, by the ancient Christians.

\* From the cemetery of Calepodius.—*Boldetti, p. 432.*

OLIMPIODORE VIVAS IN  
DEO



*Ibid.* p. 340.

GENSANE PAX ISPIRITO  
TVO.

*Ibid.* p. 418.

VLPIA VIVA SIS CVM FRA  
TRIBVS TVIS.

*Ibid.* p. 419.

IANVARIA. VIVAS IN PACE. DEP. XIII.  
KAL. DEC. VICTOR. PATER. ET SPORTVLA  
MATER. FECIT.

*Ibid.* p. 420.

These exclamations, by expressing such an anxious tender wish that those departed friends, for whom they are ejaculated, may repose in bliss, in reality betray some doubts about their enjoyment of that happiness; and thus exhibit proof that the pious Christians who uttered them, believed that the soul of the deceased might be in an intermediate state, where the efficacy of such aspirations could reach him, and his spirit could be refreshed and benefited by the supplications of his surviving brethren.

SECTION IV.

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XVIII.—THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS OFFERED FOR  
THE DEAD.

THE principal amongst those offerings which the Catholic Church presents to heaven in behalf of the souls in purgatory, is the holy sacrifice of the Mass. There is no Catholic who doubts that Christ, in dying, most perfectly satisfied for the sins of the whole world without exception; and what the holy Scripture teaches, we are careful to recite at Mass, by saying :—"Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world,\* have mercy on us.' But we believe, that, by the sacrifice of the Mass, the merits of Christ's death and passion are applied to us; Protestants consider that these same merits are applied to the soul by faith. When the Church teaches that the Mass is a propitiatory sacrifice, she maintains that Jesus Christ, actually present on the altar in the state of a victim, demands pardon for sinners, as he did upon the cross; that he satisfies the justice of his Father, and appeases his anger, while he averts

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\* *St John, C. i. V. 29.*

those chastisements which our sins have merited. It has already been proved,\* that the Mass is a true sacrifice, in which Jesus Christ is both priest and victim. He it is, therefore, who offers up himself to his Father, by the hands of his ministers in the new covenant. The motive of this unbloody oblation, is the same as that which prompted him to make an offering of himself in a bloody manner on the cross : therefore he daily makes this self-same oblation in the Mass, in order to obtain mercy for all men, by applying the merits of his passion, once suffered in a bloody manner, to their souls, and thus efface the transgressions of the living and the dead.

This dogma implies another, which has been demonstrated, when, by the authority of Scripture, it was proved, that after the remission of the guilt of sin and its eternal punishment, the sinner is yet obliged to make atonement, either in this or in a future world, to the divine justice, for those temporal pains which still remain to be expiated.

Such is the solid foundation which upholds the doctrine of praying, and of offering up the propitiatory sacrifice of the Mass for the faithful departed. Such are the reasons which induce the Church to make a pious remembrance of the dead each time the mass is celebrated. As it is her infallible belief, that those amongst her children who

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\* Chap. I.



leave this world without having sufficiently expiated their offences, are obliged to endure a temporary chastisement in the world to come, she, with the feelings of the tenderest of mothers, supplicates Almighty God to have compassion on them, and remit to them this temporary pain, through the merits and the blood of Jesus.

XIX.—ANTIQUITY OF THIS CUSTOM.

Were it requisite, it would be easy to establish, by a number of venerable and well authenticated monuments, the antiquity of this practice of offering up Mass for the departed. But the fact is so notorious, that the Protestant Bingham, with all his dislike for the Catholic dogma of Purgatory, is compelled, though with most evident reluctance, to make the following admissions, which, to the Protestant reader, must be so satisfactory as to render any other citation quite superfluous:—  
‘Possidius tells us,\* St. Austin was buried with the oblation of the SACRIFICE to God for the commendation of his body to the ground. And so St. Austin himself tells us,† his mother Monicha

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\* *Possid. Vit. Aug. Cap. 18.* Pro ejus commendanda corporis depositione SACRIFICIUM Deo oblatum est, et sepultus est.

† *Aug. Confess. Lib. ix. Cap. 12.* Cum offerretur pro ea SACRIFICIUM pretii nostri, jam juxta sepulchrum posito cadavere, priusquam deponeretur, sicut fieri solet, &c.

was buried with the offering, the SACRIFICE of our redemption, according to custom, before the body was laid in the ground. In like manner Eusebius describes the funeral of Constantine.\* He says the clergy performed the divine service with prayer, and lest we should take this for prayers only, he adds, they honoured him with the mystical liturgy, or service of the EUCHARIST, and the communion of the holy prayers. So St. Ambrose gives us to understand it was in the funeral of Valentinian, by those words in his oration upon his death.† Concerning particular prayers for the dead, Bingham goes on to say :—‘ Now this was rather done, because in the communion service, according to the custom of those times, a solemn commemoration was made of the dead in general, and prayers offered to God for them : some eucharistical, by way of thanksgiving for their deliverance out of this world’s afflictions ; and others by way of intercession, that God would receive their souls in the place of happiness ; that he would pardon their human failures, and not impute to them the sins of daily incursion, which, in the best men, are remainders of natural frailty and corruption.‡

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\* *Euseb. Vit. Const. Cap. 71.*

† *Ambros. de Obitu Valentin. p. 12.* Date manibus sancta mysteria ? Pio requiem ejus poscamus affectu.

‡ Bingham, *Antiquities of the Christian Church, Book*

XX.—BELIEF OF THE ANGLO-SAXON CHURCH IN  
PURGATORY.

Of the belief in Purgatory maintained by all our Catholic ancestors, as far back as the Anglo-Saxon times, we possess magnificent and interesting monuments.\* We will not stop to enumerate the many splendid piles that were erected, or the numerous religious houses and charitable establishments, that were endowed by their founders for the especial purpose of having prayers and masses daily offered for them after death. History attests what treasures were expended, through such a pious motive, by the kings, the nobles, and the clergy of Britain, during those ages which elapsed

XXIII. c. iii. Sec. 12, 13. Milles, who was afterwards elevated to the Protestant bishopric of Waterford, in the edition of St. Cyril's works which he printed at Oxford in 1703, candidly acknowledges, that 'The custom of praying and offering up sacrifice for the faithful departed, though not supported by any express testimony of sacred scripture, most evidently appears to have prevailed in the Church, even from the very times of the apostles.' (*Opera S. Cyrilli, a Thos. Milles, p. 297.*) An admittance that this article of Christian faith was warranted by holy writ, would have been too great a concession to be expected from a Protestant divine and a member of the University of Oxford.

\* Not a few of our more celebrated ecclesiastical monuments, such as churches, chantries, &c. owe their origin to such a belief.

from the conversion of England to Christianity, until the period when the old was exchanged for a new religion, at the commencement of the sixteenth century. It is sufficient for our present purpose to glance merely at those various religious customs observed, a thousand years ago, amongst the Anglo-Saxon inhabitants of this island; and placed on record by the writers of that nation. That the practice of praying for the dead, exerted a powerful and extensive influence on the manners of that people, is evident from their anxious endeavours to secure the prayers of the faithful, after their decease; and from the religious ceremonies they employed in the interment of their dead. 'To secure,' says Dr. Lingard, in his elegant and learned history of the Anglo-Saxon Church,—'to secure the future exertions of his friends, was in the eyes of the devout Saxon an object of high importance: and, with this view, numerous associations were formed, in which each individual bound himself to pray for the souls of the deceased members.\*

'Gilds were an institution of great antiquity

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\* 'See Hicks, *Dissert. Epis.* p. 18, *Wanley MSS.* p. 280. With the history of St. Cuthbert, which he had composed, Bede sent the following petition to the monks of Lindisfarne:—"Sed et me defuncto, pro redemptione animæ meæ quasi familiaris et vernaculi vestri orare, et missas facere. et nomen meum inter vestra scribere dignemini."—*Bed. Vit. S. Cuthbert.* p. 228.'

among the Anglo-Saxons. They were of different descriptions. Some were restricted to the performance of religious duties. As a specimen of their engagements, I may be allowed to translate a part of the laws established in the gild at Abbotbury. "If," says the legislator, "any one belonging to our association chance to die, each member shall pay one penny for the good of the soul, before the body be laid in the grave. If he neglect it, he shall be fined in a triple sum. If any of us fall sick within sixty miles, we engage to find fifteen men who may bring him home; but if he die first, we will send thirty, to convey him to the place in which he desired to be buried. If he die in the neighbourhood, the steward shall enquire where he is to be interred, and shall summon as many members as he can, to assemble, attend the corpse in an honourable manner, carry it to the minster, and pray devoutly for his soul."

'With the same view, the Anglo-Saxons were anxious to obtain a place of sepulture in the most frequented and celebrated churches. The monuments raised over their ashes would, they fondly expected, recal them to the memory, and solicit in their behalf the charity of the faithful.\* But the

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\* That such was their expectation is clearly expressed by Bede:—'Postulavit eum possessionem terræ aliquam a se ad construendum monasterium accipere, in quo ipse rex defunctus sepeliri deberet: nam et seipsum fideliter

more opulent were not content to rest their hopes of future assistance on the casual benevolence of others. They were careful to erect or endow monasteries, with the express obligation, that their inhabitants should pray for their benefactors. Of these an exact catalogue was preserved in each church; the days on which they died were carefully noticed; and on their anniversaries, prayers and masses were performed for the welfare of their souls.\* The assistance which was usually given to the dead, consisted in works of charity and exercises of devotion. To the money which the deceased had bequeathed for the relief of the indigent, his friends were accustomed to add their voluntary donations, with a liberal present to the church in which the obsequies were performed.†

credidit multum juvari eorum orationibus, qui illo in loco Domino servirent.—*Bed. Hist. lib. iii. c. 23—iv. c. 5.*

\* ‘In the Cotton library (*Dom. A. 7*) is a manuscript of the reign of Athelstan, in which the names of the principal benefactors of the church of Landisfarne are inscribed in letters of gold and silver. The list was afterwards continued, but with less elegance, till the reformation. (*Wanl. p. 249.*) In every monastery they also preserved the names of their deceased members, and were careful to pray for them on the anniversaries of their death.’ *Bed. lib. iv. c. 14.*

† ‘In the gild at London, when any of the members died, each of the survivors gave to the poor a loaf for the good of his soul. (*Leg. Sax. p. 68.*) This was the origin

‘The devotions performed in behalf of the dead, consisted in the frequent repetition of the Lord’s prayer, which was generally termed a belt of pater nosters: in the chaunting of a certain number of psalms, at the close of which the congregation fell on their knees, and intoned the anthem “O Lord, according to thy great mercy give rest to his soul, and, in consideration of thy infinite goodness, grant that he may enjoy eternal light in the company of thy saints;” and in the sacrifice of the Mass, which was always offered on the third day after the decease, and afterwards repeated in proportion to the solicitude of the friends of the dead.\* The body of the deceased was placed on a bier, or in a hearse. On it lay the book of the gospels, the code of his belief; and the cross, the signal of his hope. A pall of silk or linen was thrown over it till it reached the place of interment. His friends were summoned; strangers deemed it a duty to join the funeral procession. The clergy walked before, or on each side, bearing lighted tapers in their hands, and chaunting a portion of the psalter.

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of doles, of which some instances still remain. Before the distribution, the following prayer was pronounced:—  
 “Precamur te, Domine, clementissime pater, ut eleemosyna ista fiat in misericordia tua, ut acceptus sit cibus iste pro anima famuli tui, ill. et ut sit benedictio tua super omnia dona ista.”—*Wanley MSS. p. 83.*

\* *Paenit. Egb. apud Wilk. p. 122.*

They entered the church. If it were in the evening, the night was passed in exercise of devotion. In the morning, the sacrifice of the Mass was offered for the departed soul; the body was deposited with solemnity in the grave, the sawlshot paid, and a liberal donation distributed to the poor.\*

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### OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

It will not require much labour to overthrow the objections which are usually urged against the doctrine of Purgatory. They may be classified under four heads. 1. Exception is sometimes made by Protestants to the dogma of a middle state, through an erroneous belief that from the beginning of the world, those who departed this life, were immediately consigned to hell or admitted into heaven. 2. Because it is asserted by the inspired writers, that the faithful have nothing to fear, it is falsely argued there can be no Purgatory. 3. It is pretended that a belief in a temporary punishment after death, does not coincide with those passages of scripture, which represent the dead as resting in peace. 4. It is erroneously concluded that the doctrine of Purgatory must lessen the perfection of God's mercy, and the infinitude of Christ's merits.

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\* *Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church. Ch. viii. passim.*



## XXI.—FIRST OBJECTION REFUTED.

One amongst the bold, but unauthorized assertions advanced by the innovators in religion towards the commencement of the sixteenth century is—‘ That there never was from the beginning of the world any other place for souls, after this life, but two :—heaven for the blessed, and hell for the damned.’ In this novel doctrine are included several errors. It denies that all the venerable Patriarchs, Prophets, and other holy personages who lived previously to the Christian dispensation, went into a third place denominated Abraham’s bosom or Limbus Patrum ; but admits them all immediately into heaven ; a refutation of this is furnished in those proofs of a middle state which have been already noticed.\* It maintains that these saints of the Old Law, were in heaven before our blessed Saviour had discharged the price of our redemption ; whence it would follow, in contradiction to the word of God, that Jesus Christ was not the first who ascended and entered into heaven. St. Paul, however, while instituting a comparison between the Jewish sanctuary, and the sanctuary of heaven, observes that ;—‘ Into the tabernacle after the second veil, which is called the Holy of Holies, the High Priest alone entered once a year, the Holy Ghost signifying this, that the way into THE HOLY OF HOLIES WAS NOT YET MADE MANIFEST

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\* See Nos. 5, 6, 7, 8 of this chapter.

while the former tabernacle was yet standing '\*.... for Jesus is not entered into the Holies made with hands, the patterns of the true; but into heaven itself:† having therefore, brethren, a confidence in the entering into the Holies by the blood of Christ: a NEW and living way, which he hath dedicated for us through the veil.† The same way in which Jacob laments the supposed death of his favourite Joseph,§ completely refutes the Protestant supposition, that the saints of the Old Law, were admitted into the joys of heaven immediately they died. No one believes that Jacob, on his departure from this world, was to be consigned to the hell of the damned. According to the modern principles adopted by some Protestants, the Patriarch was to be immediately conveyed to heaven; and not to go to any third place; he himself however did not expect such a happiness, as the instantaneous enjoyment of the heavenly presence; but on the contrary, declares that he is to go to a third place—hell, (where our Saviour afterwards went) and there find his child. It will be of no service to adduce the examples of Henoch's translation, or of Elias's ascent in a fiery chariot. Of Henoch the book of Genesis tells us;—' That he walked with God and was seen no more: because God took him.'|| St. Paul rehearses almost verbatim this

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\* *Heb. C. ix. V. 3, 7, 8.* † *Ib. V. 24.* ‡ *Ib. C. x. V. 19, 20.*

§ See No. 5 of this chapter. || *Gen. C. v. V. 24.*

passage from the Pentateuch.\* But neither in the writings of Moses, nor in the letter of the Apostle, is there uttered a syllable, which indicates that this holy man was introduced into the beatific vision—that is heaven properly so called. With regard to the prophet, who went up into *heaven* by a whirlwind,† it is to be observed that the word שָׁמַיִם *shamaim* in the Hebrew original, which is translated in the Bible by the term ‘heaven,’ also signifies the *celestial expanse*, and is not unfrequently rendered in Greek ἀήρ, and in English ‘*air*.’‡

The inspired pages, therefore, merely inform us, that Elias was removed from the earth, and elevated into the air; but say nothing of his being transported into the unclouded presence of God. Indeed, so far were the sons of the Prophets at Jericho, from believing that Elias, though wafted in a fiery chariot, and borne by a whirlwind into *heaven*, (the air) was admitted into the kingdom of Jehovah, that they said to Eliseus (Elisha);—‘Behold there are with thy servants fifty strong men that can go, and seek thy master lest perhaps

\* *Heb. C. xi. V. 5.*

† 4 *Kings, C. ii. V. 11*, Protest. Translat. 2 *Kings*, &c.

‡ Aquila and Theodotion render שָׁמַיִם by ἀήρ, *Job xxxv. V. 11*, and the Protestant Translation frequently by *the air*. See *Gen. C. i. V. 30*, and *C. vii. V. 3*, 2 *Sam. C. xxi. V. 10*, *Prov. xxx. V. 19*, *Eccles. C. x. V. 20*.

the spirit of the Lord hath taken him up and cast him upon some mountain or into some valley.\*

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\* 4 *Kings*, C. ii. V. 16. (Protest. Translat. 2 *Kings*, &c.

That death must be endured by all men, is continually asserted in the Holy Scriptures, and is especially noticed by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, whom he thus addresses;—‘Wherefore as by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death: and so death passed upon all men.’ (*Rom. C. v. V. 12.*) It would seem, therefore, when the same Apostle, while writing to the Hebrews, (*C. xi. V. 5*) says;—‘By faith Henoch was translated that he should not see death, and he was not found because God had translated him,’—that his words are to be interpreted in a qualified sense, as expressive, not that a sentence common to ALL men was ultimately and absolutely annulled in favour of this holy Patriarch; but that he should not have it passed upon him in the manner, and according to the ordinary course of nature. The form of expression adopted by the inspired writer of the book of Kings while recording the departure of the Prophet on the whirlwind, is not fortuitous: but, as it perfectly resembles that employed by Moses in noticing the translation of Henoch, seems to have been designedly selected. This circumstance affords another motive to support a pious belief entertained by the Church, that Henoch and Elias were removed from the earth to some other place, where they are still living; and whence both of them will return to preach penance to the nations, and combat against Antichrist, by whom they are to be put to death. Many commentators on the holy Scriptures refer to Henoch and Elias that passage of the Apocalypse in which it is promised:—‘And I will give unto my two witnesses, and

In fine, this erroneous opinion of Protestants, that there are, and ever were but two states;—heaven and hell, is directly refuted by the scriptures and by the creed of the Apostles.

The phrase perpetually made use of by the inspired writers of the old Testament, even when they are treating of the most holy personages, is, that at their death they went down to hell;\* or, in other words, they descended not into a grave which could receive their bodies only, but ‘into hell,’—into that common receptacle, wherein reposed the souls of the holy patriarchs and prophets, and of all those righteous men who lived before the time of the Messiah, whom they were expecting to unbar the gates of Heaven, that had been closed against all the sons of Adam,—into that hell, whither our divine Redeemer, after expiring on the cross, went and ‘preached to those spirits that were in *prison*.’† The doctrine of the apostles’ creed is in perfect accordance with the

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they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sack-cloth. These are the two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks, that stand before the Lord of the earth.’—*Apoc. C. xi. V. 3, 4*. See the *Vecchio Testamento, tradotto in Lingua Italiana da Antonio Martini, Arcivescovo di Firenze: Genesi, Cap. v. V. 24*.

\* In Hebrew, שְׁאוֹל, *sheol*; in Greek, ᾗδης; in Latin, *ad inferos*, or *ad infernum*.

† 1 *Peter, C. iii. V. 19*.

Scriptures. That symbol of Christianity teaches us, that after our Saviour was dead and BURIED—that is, put into the grave—he descended into hell,' according to his soul. St. Jerom, in reference to the Mosaic dispensation, observes :—‘ If Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were in hell, who was in the kingdom of heaven? and again : ‘ Before the coming of Christ, Abraham was in hell ; after his coming, the thief was in Paradise.’\*

St. Jerom, however, was well aware that neither the hell, in which abode the patriarchs, nor the Paradise, that received the soul of the repentant thief upon the cross, was heaven. The comment of St. Augustin on the Psalms, is pertinent to the present subject. Of that passage†—‘ Thou hast delivered my soul from the lower hell ’—the celebrated doctor of the Church observes, that the *lower hell* is the place where the damned for all eternity are tortured ; the *higher hell* is that, in which the souls of the just found rest ; and hence both abodes are denominated Hell. To avoid this distinction, of a lower and higher hell, the first Protestant translators of the Bible rendered it *lowest grave*,—under the apprehension, that by giving the true version of the words of the psalmist, the clearest scripture-proof might be furnished, to establish the belief of two hells, out of one of

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\* *Epitaph. Nepot. Cap. iii*

† *Psalm lxxxv. V. 13.* (Protest. Ver. *Psalm lxxxvi.*)

which there was a possibility of returning ; and where, indeed, the spotless soul of Jesus Christ abode for part of three days ; and whence it afterwards arose, and was united to his body. In the new Protestant version of the Bible, made in 1688, this passage was partially emended. For 'grave' was substituted the proper word, 'hell;' but the superlative 'lowest' was not changed for the comparative 'lower,' as it should have been. The translators were perfectly aware that the comparative 'lower' would have clearly indicated a distinction between the higher and a 'lower' hell,—between a Purgatory and a place of eternal reprobation ; for so decisively is the text in favour of such a doctrine, that Tertullian remarked :—' I know that the bosom of Abraham was no heavenly place, but only the higher part of hell.\*'

XXII.—ARGUMENTS FROM SCRIPTURE ANSWERED.

Under this head may be arranged those objections which Protestants study to raise up against the existence of a third place, on the authority of the following passages in holy Scripture. Because the wise man has declared that—' If the tree fall to the south, or to the north, in what place soever it shall fall, there shall it be ;†—it is gratuitously

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\* *Lib. iv. adversus Marcion.* Tertullian flourished about the year 194. Consult Ward's *Errata*.

† *Eccles. C. xi. V.3.*

assumed, that after death there are but two places open for us, whence there is no returning ; and, in consequence, there is no Purgatory. That such a sentence of the wise man does not, however, exclude the existence of a Purgatory, is evident. In the first place, if the comparison between the soul of man and a cut-down tree, supposed to be included in this passage of Ecclesiastes, be rigorously insisted on, it would go to deny the general resurrection, and persuade us to conclude, that as the tree, once felled, will decay and moulder away, and never more be animated with sap, nor sprout, nor live again ; so man, when once he be overtaken by death, will crumble into dust, from which he sprang, nor will he ever rise again, but be annihilated. In the second place, though these words be applied to indicate the future destiny of the soul, and to express that if we leave this world under the guilt of mortal sin, we shall be adjudged to suffer hell's perpetual torments ; but, if in God's favour, Heaven is to be our never-ending recompense ; still, they by no means exclude the *passage* of the soul through the cleansing fire of Purgatory, before it arrives at its ultimate destination. It is true, that immediately we die, we are to receive our sentence of *final* pain or *final* happiness. While the detention of the soul in Purgatory, is but for a certain period ; the very fact of its being sent there, makes its *ultimate* destiny to be fixed,—it is decreed to go to Heaven, when purified in



such a manner, that it may be admitted 'where nought defiled can enter.'\* According to St. Jerom, the south is indicative of a region of light ; the north signifies a land of obscurity and darkness ; hence, the first is a figure of heaven,—the second, of the infernal dungeon. But he who dies in the favour of God, yet not without some smaller faults to make atonement for,—some fainter stains of sin upon his soul, has fallen to the south ; since his spirit is detained, for a limited period, in Purgatory, with the *certitude* of *final* happiness—is bid to stand for a season at the threshold of that kingdom of holiest, celestial light, until it be pure enough to pass the beaming portals.

Again, it is argued, though falsely, that there can be but two places, since St. Matthew informs us,† that, at the last day, Christ our judge will indicate but two places, and mention nothing about Purgatory : for he will say to those on his right hand :—'Come ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world ;' while he will turn to those who shall be on his left hand, and say to them : 'Depart, you cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels.'—To this it may be replied, that after the day of general judgment, concerning which St. Matthew is here speaking, there will be two states only ; for Purgatory will

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\* *Apoc. C. xxi. V. 27.*

† *St. Matt. C. xxv. V. 34, 41.*

then have an end. There will remain no other places but heaven for the righteous, and hell for the wicked. Those, however, who advance these words of the evangelist in opposition to the doctrine of Purgatory, should not neglect to consider the expression made use of by the judge, while pronouncing the sentence of eternal reprobation on the impious:—‘Depart,’ he will say to them, ‘Depart, you cursed, into everlasting fire,’—not into flames which, on some day, shall cease to scorch you like those of the lower hell, that did exist till now,—not into a place of *temporary* punishment, like that of ancient Purgatory,—but, go into EVER-LASTING fire; yes, go, not into that fire that served to fit the saints of every era for heaven, that purified their souls from every smaller speck of earthly imperfection and of human frailty; and in whose regard the declaration of my servant Paul has been exemplified, since they have been SAVED, yet so as by FIRE;\* but go, depart into that very fire which was prepared for the DEVIL and HIS ANGELS. To those who ponder well this passage of Scripture, it may ultimately appear that, instead of presenting any arguments against the dogma of Purgatory, it rather tends to corroborate that doctrine, by showing us how emphatically our divine Redeemer, at the day of general judgment, will, by inference, distinguish, while pronouncing

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\* 1 Cor. C. iii. V. 15.

condemnation, between a temporal and an everlasting flame—a fire that was prepared for Satan and his angels, and some other fire not prepared for demons.

XXIII.—SECOND OBJECTION ANSWERED.

Because it is asserted by the inspired writers that the faithful have nothing to fear, it is falsely argued that there can be no Purgatory. Such a conclusion is sometimes inferred from the words of St. Paul, in which he asserts, that ‘There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.’\* It should be remarked, that in this passage, as well as in others that resemble it, is indicated everlasting punishment, which, accurately speaking, is alone to be denominated condemnation. With reference to the words of the Apostle just recited, it is evidently his intention to signify by them, that Christians, ‘being delivered from the law of sin and death by the grace of Jesus,’ have now, through the medium of that precious and spontaneous gift, no reason for apprehending condemnation at the final judgment, provided they continue incorporated ‘in Christ Jesus,’ by the means of faith and charity; and do not yield assent to the concupiscence of the flesh. Nothing, therefore, can be extracted from this

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\* *Rom. C. viii. V. 1.*

text, either to support or to combat the doctrine of Purgatory.

XXIV.—THIRD OBJECTION.

The objection, which it is attempted to deduce from those portions of the sacred volume, that represent the souls of the departed as resting in peace, is not more weighty than the former one. What, though St. John announces to us that;—‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord: from henceforth that they may rest from their labours, for their works follow them.’\*—Must we, therefore, conclude that the inspired writer who penned this sentence, did not recognise a third place, a state between heaven and hell, in fact, a Purgatory? May we assume that the belief of temporary punishments after death, does not agree with those texts, which represent the dead as resting in peace? We are by no means warranted to draw such inferences. Who are those of whom St. John speaks in the text we have noticed? Those who *die in the Lord*,—such who depart this life in the PERFECT love and favour of Almighty God; and are professors of his true and uncontaminated faith. As these die in the grace of God, they, as it were, fall asleep upon his bosom, and will repose there for eternity. It is to these the angel of the Lord announces that, from that moment, they are to

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\* *Apoc. C. xiv. V. 13.*

enjoy the rest and bliss of heaven for endless ages. This, however, has not the slightest connexion with the state after death, of such amongst the faithful who have lived and died with certain blemishes upon their souls. It is for these *imperfect* Christians, and not for spotless *saints and martyrs*, that a state of purification is requisite. It is for such, and such only, that the Catholic Church puts up her prayers and offers the propitiatory sacrifice of the Mass ; for she knows, that those who have ordered all their ways according to the paths of righteousness, and those who seal the profession of their faith, and testify their love of God with their life-blood by a cruel martyrdom, die in the Lord, and are wafted by angel-spirits to his beatific presence ; where, instead of requiring our prayers in their behalf,—they continually pray for us, and offer our petitions to the throne of mercy.

XXV.—FOURTH OBJECTION ANSWERED.

But it is erroneously pretended that the doctrine of Purgatory must deteriorate the perfection of God's mercy, and diminish or detract from the infinite and all-atoning merits of Christ Jesus. The Catholic Church instructs us to believe, that every pardon of our sins, which we can possibly receive either in the present life, or in Purgatory, proceeds from God's pure mercy ; and that for the very smallest stain of sin, the precious blood of Christ must be applied before it can be possibly effaced. She teaches, however, that God himself has insti-

tuted certain channels for the conveyance of his grace into the souls of men, and requires certain conditions absolutely requisite before he will allow the all-sufficient and superabundant merits of Christ Jesus to be imparted to them ; such are faith, repentance, and the sacraments, for the living : to which is added Purgatory for those who leave this world in God's favour, but still with some venial imperfections to be atoned.

That the recognition of certain channels and particular conditions, does not detract from the perfection of God's mercy, is a truth that must be assented to by every rational and pious Christian ; since such channels and such conditions constitute the medium of communication between the human race and the Divinity ; and are, in fact, the instruments which the Deity itself has thought proper to select for the purpose of imparting its graces to the soul. This is a principle, which in reality is admitted by every one who bears the Christian name, however widely he may be separated from the Catholic Church ; since there is not a sect which does not strenuously insist upon the necessity of some one condition or other indispensable for the application of Christ's merits to the soul for obtaining salvation. Whether that requisite be *faith alone* ; or whether it be by faith, baptism, and good works, it is perfectly indifferent ; the implied or explicit admission that something is demanded, is an open recognition of this principle. Now it may be asked how the man who asserts

that faith, which is a mental act—a motion of the will, and that the sacrament of baptism, which is an outward sign and sacred ceremony, are necessary preparations to justification—are channels by which the grace of God is infused into the soul, can continue to be consistent with himself, and reject the doctrine of Purgatory on the plea that it detracts from the merits of God's mercy? Faith—baptism—the sacrament of the Lord's supper—all the sacraments, are so many means by which the mercy of heaven is applied to the soul; Purgatory is nothing more. Now, as neither faith, nor baptism, nor any sacrament, detracts from the mercy of God; so neither does Purgatory: whatever arguments can be produced against Purgatory are available against the necessity of faith, and the administration of the sacraments.

In the second place, it is to be observed, that the doctrine of Purgatory, so far from diminishing the inexhaustible and superabundant merits of Christ's passion, multiplies those channels through which those precious merits are distributed and applied to man: and tends no more to undervalue their inestimable price and their efficacy, than the doctrine of the necessity of faith, of baptism, of prayer, &c. The satisfaction which Jesus Christ made for man, is of an *infinite* price; but he intended that it should be applied to us in a *finite* manner. Though Christ, by his *infinite* merits, procured for us the gifts of grace and life eternal, still it is his wish that *we co-operate* with those

spiritual gifts in order to obtain eternal happiness. For what purpose did he himself teach us to pray thus : ‘Thy kingdom come’—‘Forgive us our trespasses,’—and to continue the recital of this petition even after the price of our redemption should have been paid, and heaven unbarred for our reception? For no other purpose than to assure us that prayer was one amongst those mediums, by which the merits of his passion might be applied to us. Our blessed Saviour did not conceive that a Purgatory or a place of punishment in another world, could diminish the value of that inestimable ransom he paid upon the Cross for man’s redemption; since, even after he had actually suffered, he withheld the immediate application of it in the instance of those spirits, who were still confined in prison, and to whom ‘Christ *being put to death* indeed in the flesh, *went to preach.*’\* Indeed we have no stronger motives to assert, that the doctrine of Purgatory diminishes the merits of the sacrifice upon the Cross, than we have to maintain that the Apostle St. Paul derogated from its value, when he taught ; —‘That Christ ALWAYS liveth to make INTERCESSION for us : ’\* or when he said ;—‘I fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ in my flesh.’†

From investigating these several dogmata, we will now proceed to illustrate the ritual observances comprehended in the Eucharistic sacrifice.

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\* 1 *Peter*, C.iii. V. 18, 19. † *Heb.* C.vii. V. 25 ‡ *Col.* C.i. V. 24.



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## CHAPTER VIII.

### ON CEREMONIES.

1. Man's nature proves the necessity of Religious Ceremonies.—
2. Exemplified by the earliest History of Man.—3. Ceremonies warranted by God in the Old Law.—4. By Christ in the New.—5. Ceremonies recommended by Protestant Writers.



## PART THE SECOND.

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### CHAPTER VIII.

#### ON CEREMONIES.

##### I.—MAN'S NATURE PROVES THE NECESSITY OF RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES.

IF man were a disembodied spirit, like the angels, he might worship with his soul only ; but he superadds a body to his mortal existence: as long, therefore, as his spirit is the tenant of an earthly tabernacle, and animates a portion of the visible creation ; as long as his spirit receives the impress of its ideas, and acquires its notions through the medium of the senses, and explains its own sensations by their instrumentality ; so long must the use of some exterior ceremonial be necessary, for man to exhibit a becoming religious reverence towards his Maker, who requires that all his creatures, both visible and invisible, should pay him the homage of their adoration.

##### II.—EXEMPLIFIED BY THE EARLIEST HISTORY OF MAN.

So consonant is this with the sentiments of na-

ture, that we discover her dictating to the human race, in the earliest period of its existence, certain rites and ceremonies to be observed for the outward worship of Almighty God. Abel offered sacrifice ; Enoch invoked the name of the Lord ; and the patriarchs built up altars.

### III.—CEREMONIES WARRANTED BY GOD IN THE OLD LAW.

The Divinity himself was pleased to promulgate those ritual observances which were to be practised by the Jews.

### IV.—BY CHRIST IN THE NEW.

Our divine Redeemer, though he could have wrought his miracles with the same facility as he called the world out of nothing by a single word, still however condescended to employ certain ceremonies, while he performed them. He mingled spittle in the clay\* with which he restored sight to the man born blind ; he groaned in spirit, and troubled himself before he called forth Lazarus from the tomb ;† he blessed and broke the bread, before he converted it into his body, and gave it to his disciples to eat. The example, which the Saviour has furnished, was imitated by his disciples. We find St. Paul exhorting the Corinthians to ‘do all things according to order’ in the Church ;‡

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\* *St. John, C. ix. V. 6.*

† *Ibid. C. xi. V. 33.*

‡ *1 Cor. C. 14, V. 40.*

and St. John, to impress upon our minds the grandeur of the heavenly Jerusalem, describes, in fervent language, the splendour of the awful ritual to which he was a witness, as he saw in vision the throne of the Lamb in the celestial city ; and particularly noticed the four-and-twenty elders, with their harps and fragrance-breathing vials, full of the prayers of the saints, as prostrate before the Lamb without spot, who was reclining upon the golden altar.

V.—CEREMONIES RECOMMENDED BY PROTESTANT WRITERS.

So efficacious, indeed, are the ceremonies of religion for arresting the vagrancy of thought during the season of prayer ; so calculated are they for abstracting the heart of man from this world ; and for assisting him to stand in imagination at the throne of the Divinity in heaven, and pour out his soul in profound adoration before it, that many writers, though they differ from the Catholic Church in their religious credence, lend a willing testimony in favour of her ceremonial. ‘ If all men,’ says Knox, ‘ were enlightened by education and philosophy, and at all hours actuated by the principles of reason, it would be unnecessary to have recourse to external objects. But as there must always be a great majority, who, for want of opportunities or capacities for improvement,

are weak and ignorant ; and as even amongst the wise and learned there are none who are constantly exempted from the common infirmities of human nature, it becomes expedient to devise modes of operating on the soul, through the medium of the senses. It was for this reason, that in all great communities the officers and offices of religion have been surrounded with whatever is calculated to arouse the attention, to interest the heart, to strike the eye, and to elevate the imagination. I cannot help thinking, therefore, that those well-meaning reformers, who wish to divest religion of external splendour, are unacquainted with the nature of man, or influenced by narrow motives ; and that they who repudiate all ornament, and all the modes of affecting the senses of the vulgar in the offices of religion, as indecent, impious, or improper, do not recollect the temple of Solomon, but suffer their good sense to be overpowered, in this instance, by the zeal of a barbarous fanaticism.\*

The author of the 'Principles of Taste' remarks :— 'Every person who has attended the celebration of High Mass at any considerable ecclesiastical establishment, must have felt how much the splendour and magnificence of the Roman Ca-

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\* *Essays Moral and Literary*, by Vicesimus Knox, Num. 151, Vol. II. p. 274.

tholic worship tends to exalt the spirit of devotion, and to inspire the soul with rapture and enthusiasm. Not only the impressive melody of the vocal and instrumental music, and the imposing solemnity of the ceremonies, but the pomp and brilliancy of the sacerdotal garments, and the rich and costly decorations of the altar, raise the character of religion, and give it an air of dignity and majesty unknown to any of the Reformed Churches.\*

The rational opinion which good sense has induced these and many other reflecting Protestant writers to adopt and advocate, on the propriety and advantages of impressing the aid of ceremonies into the service of religion, is in perfect accordance with those principles, which have at all times and in every place, influenced the Church in the regulation of her economy and discipline, throughout the widely extending household of the faith. This we gather from the solicitude with which she every where insists upon the exact observance of those ancient rites, according to which we always behold her celebrating the liturgy and administering the sacraments, as well as from her recorded declarations on the subject. 'Such,' observes the Council of Trent, 'such being the nature of man

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\* *An Analytical Enquiry into the Principles of Taste*, by Richard Payne Knight, *Second Edition*, Part III. Sect. xlviii. p. 363.

that, without exterior aids, he cannot be easily elevated to a meditation on divine subjects, on this account our pious mother, the Church, has instituted certain rites ; for instance, that some parts of the Mass should be pronounced in an under voice, other parts in an elevated tone. She has also employed ceremonies, such as mystic benedictions, lights, incense, vestments, and other things of this kind, in accordance with apostolic discipline and tradition, for the purport not only that the majesty of so great a sacrifice might appear in becoming splendour, but that the minds of the faithful might, by these visible signs of piety and religion, be excited to a contemplation of those sublime things which lie hid in this sacrifice.\*

Instead of blaming, therefore, we should rather applaud the Catholic Church, for employing such

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\* Cum natura hominum ea sit, ut non facile queat sine adminiculis exterioribus ad rerum divinarum meditationem sustolli, propterea pia mater Ecclesia ritus quosdam, ut scilicet quædam submissâ voce, alia vero elatiore, in Missa pronuntiarentur, instituit. Cæremonias item adhibuit, ut mysticas benedictiones, lumina, thymiamata, vestes, aliaque id genus multa, ex apostolicâ disciplinâ et traditione, quò et majestas tanti sacrificii commendaretur, et mentes fidelium per hæc visibilia religionis et pietatis signa ad rerum altissimarum, quæ in hoc sacrificio latent, contemplationem excitarentur.—*Sessio. xxii. C. v. Concil. Trident.*



various, but appropriate, ceremonies in her public service. They fix the attention; they throw a certain awe around the mysteries of religion; to the unlettered they are so many sources of the easiest instruction; and, on every occasion, by teaching man to abstract himself from the common usages of ordinary life, they impart a becoming dignity to the minutest action which is performed in the service of Almighty God.

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### CHAPTER IX.

#### ON THE CROSS.

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## PART THE SECOND.

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### CHAPTER IX.

#### ON THE CROSS.

##### I.—SIGN OF THE CROSS REFERRED TO IN THE OLD SCRIPTURE.

IN many passages of the sacred Scriptures, the Cross is referred to with peculiar distinction. The earliest record of such a notice we discover in the book of Ezechiel, where the prophet narrates, that during the vision in which it was given him to behold the abominations perpetrated in Jerusalem, the Lord directed one of the six destroyers 'to mark TAU upon the foreheads of the men who sighed and mourned for all the abominations that were committed;' but to the other five he said;—'Go ye after him through the city and strike,—utterly destroy old and young, maidens, children, and women: but upon whomsoever ye shall see Tau, kill him not.\*' The letter Tau is the last in the Hebrew alphabet. According to its ancient manner of being written, it per-


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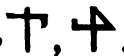
\* *Ezech. C. ix. V. 4-6.*

fectly resembled a cross, as St. Jerom remarked\* 1400 years ago; and may be observed at the present day, by consulting the medals, manuscripts, inscriptions, and other ancient monuments of Hebrew antiquity in which this letter occurs.†

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\* Antiquis Hebræorum literis, quibus usque hodie utuntur Samaritani, extrema Thau litera crucis habet similitudinem, quæ in Christianorum frontibus pingitur, et frequenti manûs inscriptione signatur.—*S. Hieron. in c. ix. Ezech.*

† See Walton's Prolegomena, by *Wrangham*, tom. II, at the beginning of which there is a plate with the presumed ancient Hebrew alphabet, in which the Tau is written exactly in the form of what is denominated a Greek Cross in one instance, and in another, like what is called St. Andrew's Cross, thus .

Bernard's Tables by Morton, in the '*Alphabetum ante Christi* (1509) *a nummis Judaicis, Africanisque et a Pentateucho Mosis*,'—exhibit the Tau (*t. th.*) thus—; and in Swinton's '*Inscrip. criticæ*,' (4to. Oxf. 1750) among the '*Literæ Alphabeti Samaritani et Phœnicii numismaticæ*,' we find Tau thus written—. In the Spanish translation of Sallust, by the Infant Don Gabriel in 1772, called the Infant Sallust, there is a curious dissertation by Father Perez Bayer, on the resemblance between the ancient Hebrew and Phœnician alphabets, in which it is observed that the Hebrew Tau was written in pure Phœnician, . The learned Friar collected the letters of his comparative Hebrew, pure Phœnician, Carthaginian,

## II.—IN THE NEW.

Our Lord himself has been pleased to refer, on more than one occasion, to this instrument of his passion. For he says;—‘He that taketh not up his cross and followeth me, is not worthy of me :’\* and he observes to his disciples;—‘If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me :’† and the Evangelist, in his enumeration of those terrible prognostics, which are to herald the coming of the day of final judgment, mentions the appearance of the Cross amid the heavens, where the sun shall then be

and Spanish-Phœnician alphabets, from ancient coins and medals, as he himself informs us;—‘*Letras de los Fenices y de sus colonias que se hallen en las monedas de que se ha tratado en este Escrito, colejados con las del Alfabeto Hebreo.*’

Not far from Mount Sinai there is what is denominated Waady-El-Muketteb, or Written Valley. Upon the surface of the rocks that line this pass in the desert, there are many inscriptions, several of which are written in an unknown character. Some scholars have conjectured that these latter inscriptions were traced by the children of Israel at the exode from Egypt. However this may be, it is curious to behold in them, letters perfectly resembling the figure of the Cross, as the reader may observe by consulting *vol. II, part 1*, of the ‘*Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature*,’ where these inscriptions are inserted after the copy which was taken of them, in the year 1820, by the Rev. G. F. Grey.

\* *St. Matt, C. x. V. 38.*

† *Ib. C. xvi. V. 24.*

darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and whence the stars shall have fallen ;—‘ And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn ; and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with much power and majesty.’\* All the most learned, and ancient Fathers, as St. Chrysostom, St. Jerom, St. Hilarius, Theophylactus, and our countryman the venerable Bede, are unanimous in interpreting ‘ the sign of the Son of man,’ to signify the Cross ; and the ablest among our Biblical scholars have applauded such an interpretation.

This instrument of our redemption through the blood of Jesus, was perpetually before the eyes of the eloquent St. Paul, who, so often makes such beautiful and appropriate allusions to it, in almost every one of his epistles ;† but more emphatically, in the concluding part of his letter to the Galatians, where he exclaims ;—‘ God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.’

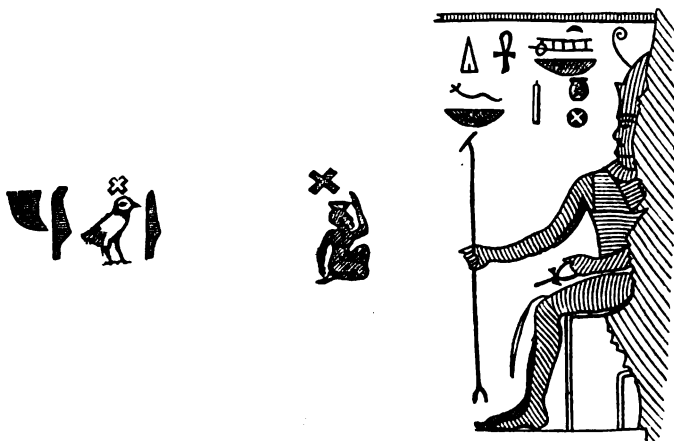
This reverence for the Cross was imparted by the Apostles to the new believers, who, from considering it with horror as the instrument of igno-

\* *St. Matt. C. xxiv. V. 30.*

† 1 *C. i. V. 17-18.*—*Gal. C. v. V. 11.*—*Ib. C. vi. V. 12-14.*  
—*Ephes. C. ii. V. 16.*—*Phil. C. ii. V. 8.*—*Ib. C. iii. V. 18.*  
—*Coll. C. i. V. 20.*—*Ib. C. ii. V. 14.*—*Heb. C. xii. V. 2.*



miny, after their initiation in the Christian faith, regarded it as the most glorious of trophies and the emblem of their victorious master. They oftentimes impressed their foreheads with this mystic sign, to manifest their own Christianity, or to recognize that of an unknown brother in the faith. That such was the fact may be established by the most irrefragable authorities.



Hieroglyphics exhibiting the figure of the Cross.

### III.—ANTIQUITY OF THE CUSTOM OF MAKING THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

Tertullian, who flourished in the year 194, observes ;—‘ At every step and movement, whenever we come in or go out, when we dress ourselves, or prepare to go abroad, at the bath, at table, when lights are brought in, on lying, or sitting down ; whatever we be doing, we make the sign of the

Cross upon our foreheads.\* St. John Chrysostom, who was archbishop of Constantinople about the year 397, thus addresses his auditors ;—‘ Every-where is the symbol of the Cross present to us. On this account we paint and sculpture it on our houses, our walls, and our windows, we trace it on our brows, and we studiously imprint it on our souls and minds.† A similar testimony concerning

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\* Ad omnem progressum, atque promotum, ad omnem aditum, et exitum, ad vestitum et calceatum, ad lavacra, ad mensas, ad lumina, ad cubilia, ad sedilia, quæcumque nos conversatio exercet frontem crucis signaculo terimus. —*Tertul. lib. de coron. milit. c. ii.*

† Πανταχου το συμβολον ἡμῖν του σταυρου παρισταται· δια τουτο καὶ ἐπὶ οικίας καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν τοιχῶν, καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν θυριδῶν, καὶ ἐπὶ μετώπων, καὶ ἐπὶ της διανοίας μετὰ πολλῆς ἐπιγραφομεν αὐτον της σπουδῆς.—*S. Chrysost. hom. cxxxix.* The figure of the Cross may be frequently seen chiselled on the jambs of the door-ways, conducting to the little oratories in the Roman catacombs, as may be observed in the plates in Boldetti, *pp.* 16, 35. *Osservazioni sopra i Cimiterj.* A curious passage illustrating the practice of the early Christians on this point, is here extracted from an interesting work by the Rev. Dr. Russell, entitled, ‘*View of ancient and modern Egypt.*’ Noticing the numerous sepulchral monuments which constitute the Necropolis, or cemetery in the great Oasis, Dr. Russell says ;—‘ One in particular is divided into aisles like our churches ; and that it has been used as such by the early Christians, is clearly evinced by the traces of saints on the walls. In all, there is a Greek Cross, and the celebrated Egyptian hieroglyphic the Crux Ansata,

the ancient custom of making the sign of the Cross, is furnished by St. Jerom, who delivers the follow-

or Cross with a handle, which, originally signifying life, would appear to have been adopted as a Christian emblem either from its similarity to the shape of the Cross, or from its being considered the symbol of a future existence,' p. 397.

Socrates, (A.D. 440) the ecclesiastical historian, mentions that on demolishing at Alexandria a temple dedicated to Serapis, were observed several stones sculptured with letters denominated hieroglyphics, which exhibited the figure of the Cross. Certain gentile inhabitants of the city who had lately been converted to the Christian faith, initiated in the method of interpreting these enigmatic characters, declared that the figure of the Cross was considered as the symbol of future life. *Εν τῇ ναφ του σαραπίδος λυομενου και γυμνουμενου ηυρητο γραμματα εγκεχαραγμενα τοις λιθοις, τα καλουμενα ιερογλυφικα.—Τουτων δε αμφισβητουμενων, τινες των ελληνων τῷ χριστιανισμῷ προσελθοντες τα ιερογλυφικα τε γραμματα επισταμενοι, διερμηνευοντες τον σταυροειδη χαρακτηρα, ελεγον σημαινειν ζωνν επερχομενην.—Socrates, Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. 17.*

Rufinus (A. D. 397) had some years before recorded the same fact in almost similar expressions. 'Signum Domini-*nicæ Crucis inter illas quas dicunt—ιερατικας—id est sacerdotales litteras, habere Aegyptii dicunt, velut unum ex cæteris litterarum quæ apud illos sunt elementis, cujus litteræ seu vocabuli hanc esse asserunt interpretationem VITA VENTURA.—Ruffinus, Hist. Eccles. lib. ii. c. 26.*

Not only the celebrated Crux Ansata, but other hieroglyphic characters, bearing an exact resemblance to a Cross, frequently recur on Egyptian monuments of the highest antiquity, as well as on those of comparatively re-

ing exhortation in one of his epistles to his friend;  
— ‘Frequently trace the sign of the Cross upon

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cent erection. Particular examples of this fact may be instanced in the Lateran, Campensian, and Barberini obelisks, as those monuments which now stand at Rome are denominated. The first two are beautiful and very ancient specimens of Egyptian art and grandeur; the third is of more modern date, as the names of Hadrianus, Cæsar, Sabina, and Antinous, are inscribed upon it. The first of the accompanying wood-cuts is copied from the lower part of the Campensian; the second from the Barberini obelisk, both of which are given in Zoega. (*De Usu &c. Obeliscorum.*)

That the first believers in the doctrines of Jesus, whether in Egypt or Nubia, regarded the Cross with religious veneration, and considered it, like Catholics of the present day, to be the most expressive symbol of Christianity, may be evidenced in many of the ruins scattered through those interesting countries where the traveller frequently discovers the remains of ancient Pagan temples, which he ascertains to have been once dedicated to the worship of the true God, by observing the figure of the cross hallowing every corner of them, and standing out conspicuously upon their walls and columns, to announce its triumph over the fabled deities to whom those fanes were originally erected. The author of a valuable little work on Egyptian Antiquities, published in the *Library of Entertaining Knowledge*, (vol. xvii. part i.) in speaking of the monuments in Upper Nubia, observes:— ‘The few remains of Dongola Agusa, on the east bank of the Nile, lat. 18° 15’, show that the Christian worship was once established in this place. These granite columns

your forehead.\* The Christian poet Prudentius, who wrote towards the decline of the fourth century, notices the Catholic practice of making the sign of the Cross, in the following verses :—

When sleep steals on, you go to rest,  
And the chaste couch you've scarcely prest,  
O! let the Cross's figure sign  
That forehead, and that heart of thine.  
The Cross drives every harm away,  
Darkness ne'er will bide its stay;  
Mark'd with this sacred sign, the mind  
To fluctuate you'll never find.†

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and capitals, ornamented with crosses and lilies, mark the epoch to which this edifice belonged, and express, with more certainty than the evidence of books alone, a fact not without interest in the history of this barbarous country.' (*British Museum, Egyptian Antiq. vol. i. p. 159.*) When the day arrives that London shall be a lonely wilderness, where shall the traveller who explores its ruins, light upon the fragments of a cross, to tell that Christ was ever known and worshipped there?

\* *Epis. ad Demetriadem, t. i. p. 64.* We have, in a recent note, given this father's words on the mystic Tau mentioned in Ezechiel.

† *Fac, quum vocante somno  
Castum petis cubile,  
Frontem, locumque cordis  
Crucis figura signet.  
Crux pellit omne crimen :  
Fugiunt crucem tenebræ :  
'Tali dicata signo  
Mens fluctuare nescit.*—*Cath. vi. ante Som.*

Prudentius and his works have already been noticed in a note to *Num. 8, C. v. p. 342.*

Constantine the Great, the first Christian Emperor, as well as his whole army, when encamped about a mile from Rome, on the day before the battle with the tyrant Maxentius, beheld, at noon, a cross of brilliant light just above the sun, with these words, in shining letters, around it:—Εν τούτῳ Νικά—‘By this conquer.’ This circumstance we gather from the first book of the life of Constantine, written by the historian Eusebius, who assures us that he was favoured with the narration of it by the emperor himself.\*

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\* In a letter addressed to the emperor Constantius, St. Cyril of Jerusalem describes the miraculous appearance of a cross in the heavens, which this holy bishop and all his flock witnessed on the 7th of May, in the year 351. From about nine o'clock in the morning until a late hour in the day, was this cross visible to all the inhabitants, whether Christian or Pagan, of Jerusalem. It extended through the heaven, from mount Golgotha to the Mount of Olives, and shone with an effulgence more splendid than the rays of the sun. The people, including all ranks and ages, hastened in a crowd to the church, and unanimously celebrated the praises of the only begotten Son of God, Christ Jesus, the worker of wonders.—*Opera S. Cyrilli, curâ Ant. Touttée, p. 351.* The genuineness of this epistle has been ably vindicated, against the futile objections of the Protestant Rivet, by the Benedictine editor, who produces, at the end of the letter, the testimony of St. Jerom, Socrates, Idatius, and the Alexandrine

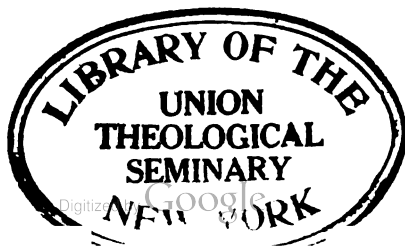
## IV.—RESPECT OF THE ANCIENT CHRISTIANS TOWARDS THE CROSS.

That the primitive Christians were exemplary in the reverence which they manifested towards the Cross, may be gathered from a variety of sources. According to Tertullian, they were denominated by the Pagans, ‘Crucis religiosi,’ or, ‘devout towards the Cross.’ Amongst the fragments of Christian antiquities which are still preserved, we recognize splendid testimonials of this respect. In the Christian cemeteries, scarcely one sepulchral monument has been discovered which does not bear the monogram of Christ, arranged in the form of a cross.\* The rings that have been

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Chronicle, in corroboration of this miraculous event, the anniversary of which still continues to be celebrated all through the Greek Church as a solemn festival. (*Vide Menæum Græcum, ad diem 7 Maii.*) Dr. Adam Clarke observes:—‘If this letter be really the production of St. Cyril, the fact is a curious one, and the appearance might have been designed to accredit, in the sight of the heathen, that doctrine of Christ crucified which was the grand key-stone in the Christian fabric.—*Concise View of Sacred Literature, vol. i. p. 300.*

\* This monogram  may almost invariably be discerned upon the greater part of the monuments of Christian antiquity which have descended to us. Its appearance upon the marbles, mortuary tiles, and lamps, ex-



found in these tombs, display the same emblem ; and the fresco-paintings perpetually exhibit the same holy sign.

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tracted from the catacombs, and exhibiting the sepulchral inscriptions of the martyrs, and early believers in the gospel, who were buried there, must be familiar to every one who is anywise conversant in Christian archæology. It is composed of the two Greek characters X and P, the two letters with which the name of Christ commences in Greek, Χριστός. It was inserted, along with the palm-branch, in the inscription over the tomb of Pope St. Cajus, who suffered martyrdom in the reign of Dioclesian ; (*Boldetti, Osservazioni sopra i Cimiterj*, p. 102) and may be observed, together with the same emblem of victory, in the sepulchral epitaphs of the martyrs SS. Alexander and Marius, (*Ibid.* pp. 232-233) the first of whom suffered under the emperor Antoninus, the latter under Hadrianus. The assertion of the Protestant Basnage that no monument bearing this monogram, of a date anterior to the reign of Constantine the Great, could be produced from the catacombs, is now completely exploded. It was for some time a favourite but totally unfounded hypothesis with several Protestant writers, that this cruciform monogram of Christ was the invention of the first Christian emperor, who, by ordering it to be inscribed upon the standard called the Labarum, and affixed, instead of the eagle and thunder-bolts of Jove, upon the shields and helmets of the Roman legions, first gave rise to its adoption by the faithful as a symbol of belief in Jesus. The substitution of Christian in place of Pagan ornaments, in the dress and armour of the soldiery, is noticed by Prudentius,





*Inscription found in the Catacombs at St. Agnes's. See Boldetti, Vol. II. p. 453.\**

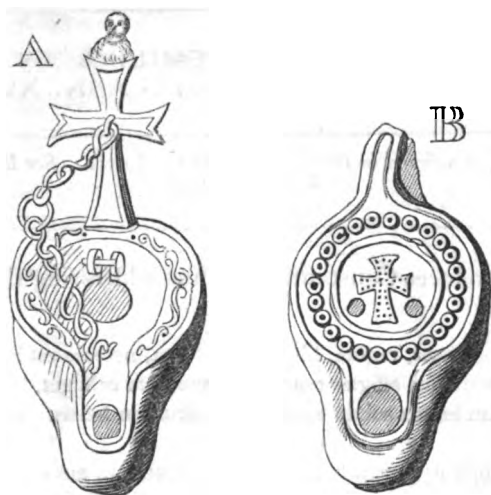
who introduces Constantine as thus addressing the city of Rome:—

Agnoscas, regina, libens mea signa, necesse est :  
In quibus effigies crucis aut gemmata refulget,  
Aut longis solidō ex auro præfertur in hastis.

\* \* \* \* \*  
Christus purpureum gemmanti textus in auro  
Signabat labarum, clypeorum insignia Christus  
Scripserat, ardebat summis crux addita cristis.

*Prudentius, cont. Symmach. Lib. 1.*

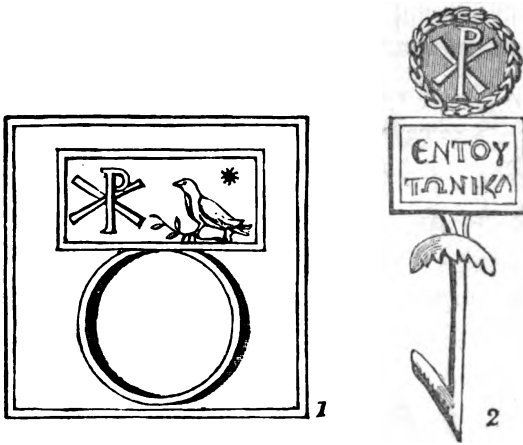
\* The figure of a fish, as a Christian hieroglyphic, is of very frequent recurrence on the monuments of primitive antiquity. The Greek term ΙΧΘΥΣ, which signifies a fish, is composed of the initial letters of the sacred name and titles, as written in the Greek language, of our divine Redeemer:—Ιησοῦς Χριστός Θεοῦ Υἱός Σωτήρ—Jesus Christ the Son of God, our Saviour. On account of that spiritual regeneration, which man received by being born, as it were, again by water, and initiated into the faith of Jesus, and from the conviction that if they did not continue in that vivifying belief, they would be spiritually dead—must infallibly lose their salvation; it was that the first Christians delighted to employ the symbol, and designate themselves by the enigmatical appellation of *Pisciculi*, or fishes. This we learn from Tertullian, who observes:—  
'Nos Pisciculi secundum ἰχθὺς nostrum Jesum Christum



A. *Bronze Lamp found in the Catacombs. See Aringhi, Roma Subterranea, Vol. i. p. 511.*

B. *Terracotta Sepulchral Lamp found in the Catacombs. Ibid. Vol. i. p. 519.*

in aqua nascimur ; nec aliter quam in aqua permanendo salvi sumus.' (*De Bap. c. i.*) Amongst the several religious emblems which St. Clement (A.D. 194) recommends the Christians of Alexandria to have engraved upon their rings, he enumerates the fish ; and remarks that such a sign will prevent them from forgetting their origin. (*Pædag. l. III. c. xi.*) St. Optatus Milevitanus (A.D. 370) likewise refers to the name and symbol of the fish in the following passage :—'Hic est piscis qui in baptisate per invocationem fontalibus undis inseritur, ut quæ aqua fuerat, a pisce etiam piscina vocitetur. Cujus piscis nomen, secundum appellationem Græcam in uno nomine per singulas literas turbam sanctorum nominum continet, Ιϥθυς, quod est Latine, Jesus Christus Dei Filius Salvator.'—*Contra Parmen. lib. III.*



1. *A Ring discovered in the Catacombs. See Aringhi, Vol. ii. p. 708, and D'Agincourt, Vol. v, p. 318, of the Italian translation.*
2. *The Labarum of Constantine, taken from a Terracotta Lamp.—Mamachius, Origines et Antiq. Christianæ, Tom. iii. p. 50.\**

\* The biographer of Constantine the Great has left an accurate description of the celebrated standard called the *Labarum*. Eusebius (*In Vita Constant. lib. i. c. 24.26*) tells us that this imperial banner was fashioned in the following manner. Near the extremity of the shaft of a lance sheathed in plates of gold, was affixed, in a horizontal position, a small rod so as to form the exact figure of the Cross. From this transverse little bar, hung drooping a small purple veil of the finest texture, interwoven with golden threads, and starred with such a profusion of the most brilliant jewels, that it was quite resplendent. Above this dazzling banner, arose the adorable name of Jesus Christ, written with two characters only, the Greek X or *ch*, and P or *ro*, which were very ingeniously entwined, and encircled with a golden crown profusely gemmed with the most costly precious stones. Just be-



*Portion of a basso-relievo in one of the Sarcophagi found in the Catacombs at the Vatican. See Aringhi, Vol. i. p. 295. In all probability a monument of the 4th Century.*

low the monogram of Christ, it became the custom, a little later, to insert the effigy of the reigning emperor, and of his son and consort. Fifty men, the most conspicuous amongst the imperial guards for their valour and their piety, were selected and embodied into a particular band, to whom was confided the distinguished office of carrying and defending the Labarum, which was always borne before the emperors whenever they went to battle. Banners partially resembling the imperial model, but of somewhat smaller dimensions, and wrought of less costly

That it was customary with the primitive Christians to wear about their persons, crosses made of gold, and silver, or of wood, is evident from the incident which led to the martyrdom of St. Orestes, a soldier in the Roman legions, during the reign of Dioclesian. Orestes was distinguished in his cohort for his agility in every martial exercise ; and, in particular, for the precision with which he cast the disk. Once, as he was displaying his activity in presence of his commander Lysias, a cross which the Christian soldier wore around his neck, by accident escaped from between the folds of his garment, where it lay concealed, and proclaimed the religion of Orestes, whose resolute refusal to sacrifice in honour of the Gods was crowned with martyrdom.\*

#### V.—INTRODUCTION OF THE CRUCIFIX.

Though, from the very birth of Christianity, it was a pious custom with the faithful to make the sign of the cross upon their foreheads, and to impress the same holy emblem upon the walls of their places of religious assembly—in the ceme-

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materials, were distributed through the whole army to be the future ensigns of the Roman cohorts. Figures of those standards frequently occur upon the coin of the empire, in the time of Constantine, and his more immediate successors.

\* Surius, *Tom. vi. Dec. 13, et Aringhi, Vol. ii. p. 545.*

teries—upon their altars—and upon the tombs of their martyred brethren ; yet, it was not for some years after the promulgation of the Gospel, that they ventured to exhibit the crucifix, that is, the figure of Christ suspended on the cross. Nothing could be more discreetly cautious than the manner of proceeding adopted by the Church in this affair. She manifested the most studious anxiety that the recently converted Gentiles should not experience any scandal, nor suffer the slightest detriment to their belief, from the use of images. The cross was regarded by the Pagans with the greatest horror ; and the deepest shade of infamy was cast upon the character of him who suffered death upon it. Christ crucified was, therefore, ‘ to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Gentiles foolishness.’\* This it was that withheld the Christians of the first centuries from painting the figure of our blessed Redeemer on the Cross ;† and made them exercise their ingenuity to invent the most appropriate

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\* 1 Cor. C. i. V. 23. Minutius Felix, (A.D. 170) in his beautiful dialogue between the Pagan Cæcilius and the true believer Octavius, introduces the heathen as thus vituperating Christ and his followers :—‘ Nescio an falsa, certe occultis ac nocturnis sacris apposita suspicio, et qui hominem summo supplicio pro facinore punitum, et crucis ligna feralia eorum ceremonias fabulantur, congruentia perditis sceleratisque tribuit altaria, ut id colant quod merentur.’—*Minucii Felicis Octavius*, p. 85.

† Ciampini, *Vet. Monumenta*, Vol. i. p. 201.

methods of insinuating what kind of death our Saviour underwent, without wounding the piety of the neophyte or startling the prejudices of the unbeliever. The book of the Apocalypse furnished them with a most happy as well as most beautiful illustration of the fact. Christ had been pointed out as the 'Lamb of God,' by the Baptist;\* but it was for the well-beloved disciple John, to draw the magnificent picture of the 'Lamb which was slain from the beginning of the world ;'† while he tells us that he beheld, 'In the midst of the throne, and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the ancients, a Lamb standing, as it were slain, and he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat on the throne.'‡ They delighted to copy this description of St. John ; and oftentimes translated it into colours on their walls, in fresco paintings and mosaic work ; or imaged it in marble on their sarcophagi ; and even represented it upon their articles of furniture, as may be instanced in those fragments of drinking-cups that are often discovered affixed to the tombs of the martyrs in the catacombs,§ and are now deposited at the Vatican library, in the Museum of Christian Antiquities. In these venerable monuments of early piety, the emblem of Jesus crucified,

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\* *St. John*, C. i. V. 29.

† *Apoc. C.* xiii. V. 8.

‡ *Apoc. C.* v. V. 6, 7.

§ Buonarruoti, *Osserv. sopra i Vasi antichi di Vetro*, p. 38.

the lamb, is figured as bearing a cross upon its forehead ; sometimes as slain, at other times reposing on a splendid throne ; but in painting, and mosaic, invariably encircled with an azure field, which is sprinkled with stars of gold, to represent the heavens ;\* and to signify that Christ, by his death, had conducted afflicted humanity to those happy regions. In progress of time, the lamb began to be represented as stretched upon the ground, or leaning against a cross, and not unfrequently as standing at the foot of it, and bleeding.† This we learn from a couplet in the epistle addressed by St. Paulinus‡ of Nola to Severus, in which the prelate says :—

'Neath a red cross, see Christ our Saviour stand,  
Veil'd in the figure of a snow-white lamb ;  
The lamb-like victim, unoffending, immolated  
By unjust death for our offences.§

\* As may be observed in the mosaic in the tribune of SS. Cosmas and Damianus, a church in the Roman Forum.

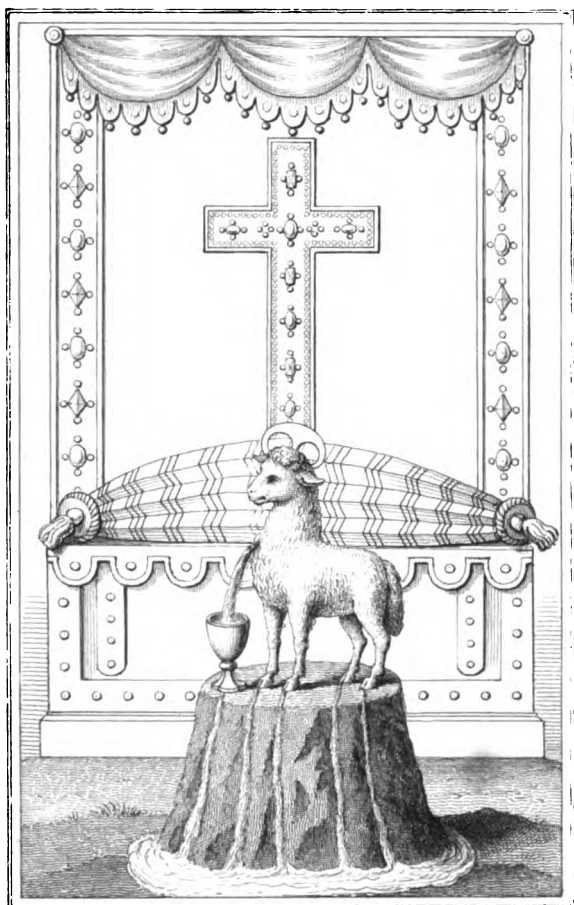
† The accompanying engraving is the copy of an ancient mosaic which adorned the apsis or tribune of the old church of St. Peter at Rome ; and is given by Casalius in his work, *De Sacris Christianorum Ritibus*, p. 3. For some other observations, see Index of the Plates.

‡ St. Paulinus was born in 353. He has been already introduced to the reader, in a note to Num. 8, Chap. v.

§ Sub cruce sanguineâ niveo stat Christus in agno  
Agnus ut innocua injusto datus hostia leto.

*Epist. xii. ad Sever. p. 155.*





*Ch. de Chantillon 1871*

*E. Morel 1872*

*From an ancient stone which adorned the altar  
of the old Church of St. Peter at Rome  
London Printed for J. Smith, 1871*



At first, this cross was represented without any ornaments; but, a little later, it became the custom to decorate it with pearls, and precious stones, and to place a crown upon its summit, and entirely encircle it with a diadem of gems, or flowers;\* and Eusebius particularly notices that Constantinople directed crosses to be painted in this manner.† St. Paulinus of Nola furnishes us with an

Continuing the description of the church which he had just erected and ornamented, St. Paulinus informs his friend Severus, that in the vestibule of this Basilica, there were several crosses painted in red colour, and over them the following inscription :—‘ Item dextra lævaque crucibus minio superpictis hæc epigrammata sunt :

Ardua floriferæ crux cingitur orbe coronæ

Et Domini fuso tincta cruore rubet.

Quæque super signum resident cœleste columbæ

Simplicibus produnt regna patere Dei.’

*Epist. ad Sever. p. 152.*

In Italy there still prevails a custom, which has no doubt descended from early Christian times, of fixing, at various places all around the walls of each church, at its dedication, the figure of the cross, encircled with a species of crown or garland. It is usually painted red, or formed of an incrustation of red marble. The crosses inserted in the walls of the beautiful churches at Rome, particularly in the pilasters of the grand nave of St. Peter’s, are very conspicuous.

\* Examples may be seen of this in the engravings which accompany *Bottari’s Roma Sotterranea*.

† *Vit. Constant. Lib. i. Cap. 30.*

explanation of such a usage in the following verses ;\*—

See how the cross of Christ a crown entwines :  
 High o'er God's temple it refulgent shines ;  
 Pledging bright guerdon for each passing pain :  
 Take up the cross, if thou the crown would'st gain.

After pursuing these steps which were so imperceptibly taken, the Crucifix or Cross bearing the figure of a dead Christ, came at last, to be displayed in public, without the slightest hesitation or reserve, especially from that period when Constantine prohibited throughout the empire, the Cross from ever being employed as an instrument of punishment; and to eradicate as speedily and with as much effect as possible, the withering germs of heathenism, that emperor erected crosses along the public ways at those different points, denominated Ubivilia by the Romans, and *Ερμης τρικεφαλος* by the Greeks; and thus made the symbol of Christianity, supplant the Mercurii and Terminal Gods of Polytheism. To an incident which manifests the religious zeal of Constantine, we must refer a custom, at present, very generally observed through Italy, and almost every Catholic country and province on the continent, of placing a large crucifix by the road-side at the entrance

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\* *Cerne coronatam Domini super atria Christi  
 Stare crucem, duro spondentem celsa labori  
 Præmia : tolle crucem, qui vis auferre coronam.*  
*Epist. xii. ad Sever. p. 151.*

of the towns and villages.\* That such was anciently the custom in England when the nation was Catholic, is a well attested fact. In a treatise on the ten commandments, entitled, 'Dives et Pauper,' and printed at Westminster by Wynken de Worde, A. D. 1496, the real and pious object for erecting the Cross by the road-side is thus expressively assigned:—'For this reason ben Crosses by ye waye, than whan folke passynge see the Crosses, they sholde thynke on Hym that deyed on ye Crosse, and worshyppe Hym above all thynges.†'

A writer notorious for his hostility to the ancient faith, observes;—'From the earliest ages of Christianity, the Cross has very naturally been made the emblem of our holy faith. It was the private mark or *signal*, by which the Christians used to distinguish each other, among their Pagan adversaries, during the times of persecution, as it was afterwards their public emblem when their danger became less imminent; and it is yet the 'sign' with which all Christian Churches, however widely differing in other respects, mark those who are admitted to the benefits of baptism. Wher-

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\* *Pelliccia*, vol. ii. p. 130.

† It is passing strange that in a land where it is boastingly declared that Christianity is a part and parcel of the law, and in whose 'Book of Common Prayer,' the *Invention* and *Exaltation of the Cross* are registered and ordained to be kept as festivals, there should have been permitted such a Gothic and indiscriminate destruction of this particular emblem of its religion.

ever the Gospel was first spread, a pious care caused Crosses to be erected as standards, around which the faithful might assemble the more conveniently to hear the divine truths inculcated; and by degrees those symbols were fixed in every place of public resort. Every town had its Cross, at which engagements, whether of a religious or worldly interest, were entered into. Every church-yard had one whereon to rest the bodies of the deceased, from which the preacher gave his lessons upon the mutability of life. At the turning of every public road was placed a Cross, for the two-fold purposes of rest for the bearers of the pious defunct, and for reminding travellers of the Saviour who died for their salvation. The boundaries of every parish were distinguished by Crosses; at which, during the ancient perambulations, the people alternately prayed and regaled themselves. Every grant from sovereigns or nobles, every engagement between individuals, was alike marked with the Cross: and in all cases, this emblem alone was deemed an efficient substitute for the subscription of a name. Crosses in short were multiplied by every means which the ingenuity of man could invent; and the people were thus kept in constant remembrance, both at home, and on their journeys, as well as in every transaction of their lives, of the foundation of the Christian faith.\*

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\* *Clavis Calendaria; or a compendious Analysis of the Calendar*, by John Brady, Vol. i. p. 359.

VI.—ANTIQUITY OF THE CUSTOM OF USING CRUCIFIXES  
IN CHURCHES.

The most ancient memorial we have of any image of our divine Redeemer hanging on the Cross, is furnished by Lactantius, (A. D. 306) or whoever was the author of the poem, 'de Passione Domini,' which, certainly bears upon its style the impress of the fourth century. The poet says :\*

' Whoe'er thou art that seek'st this temple's bound,  
Arrest thy step ; and, ere thou gazest round,  
O look on me : without one fault of mine,  
I suffer'd for thy sinfulness—thy crime.  
Mark how these hands with savage nails are bor'd,  
These limbs distent ; this back with lashes gor'd.  
See where the lance has prob'd my heaving side ;  
See how the wound pours forth a crimson tide ;  
See how these feet of mine are dug, and how  
Blood stains each limb, and trickles from my brow.'

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\* Quis quis ades, mediique subis ad limina Templi  
Siste gradum. Insonstemque tuo pro crimine passum  
Respice me. . . .

Cerne manus clavis fixas, tractosque lacertos  
Atque ingens lateris vulnus, cerne inde fluorem  
Sanguineum ; fossosque pedes, artusque cruentes.

*De Passione Domini.*

The pseudo-council in Trullo, so denominated from its having been held in a cupola-covered hall, in the emperor's palace at Constantinople, in 692, decreed, in its lxxxii canon, that as in many instances Jesus Christ had been represented under the figure of the Lamb, as he was pointed out by the finger of St. John ; for the future he should be imaged under his human form, such a way being more becoming.

From these lines, we may collect, that not only at the period when their author composed them, it was usual to have crucifixes and images of our Saviour, which did not differ in the smallest trifle from the form according to which those are fashioned which we now employ; but also that these representations of our crucified Redeemer were placed in churches.

VII.—WHY THE CRUCIFIX IS PLACED UPON THE ALTAR.

As the altar is the emblem of mount Calvary, the Cross supporting the figure of a dead Christ, is erected in the centre of it, to call to remembrance that it was Jesus crucified who paid the ransom of our sins, with his most precious blood; and that ‘There is no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved.’\*

VIII.—WHY THE SACERDOTAL GARMENTS AND THE SACRED VESSELS ARE MARKED WITH A CROSS.

A figure of the Cross is inserted on each individual article of the vestments appointed for the priest, and is affixed upon the several vessels dedicated to the sacred service, in order to announce the use to which they have been appropriated.†

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\* *Acts*, C. iv. V. 12.

† In Anastasius Bibliothecarius is often to be met with the epithet, *Stauracinus*—applied to vestments and church-ornaments marked with the figure of the Cross.



## IX.—WHY MADE SO OFTEN BY THE PRIEST AT MASS.

In the administration of baptism, and the other sacraments, as well as during the sacrifice of the altar, the Church prescribes that the sign of the Cross be frequently employed, to publish her belief that all grace is derived only from the blood which Jesus spilt upon the Cross.

## X.—BY CATHOLICS IN GENERAL.

The devout Catholic, studious to emulate the fervour of St. Paul, who gloried in the Cross of Christ,\* is accustomed, at the commencement and conclusion of every pious action, to sign himself with the sign of the Cross, at the same time reverently pronouncing these words ;—‘ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen,’—and thus not only makes profession of acknowledging the existence of one God, in three persons ; but attests his belief in the mysteries of the Incarnation and Atonement. And furthermore, Catholics so frequently employ the sign of the Cross, not only to proclaim to the world that they are not ashamed of the Cross of Jesus, and to make their public profession of belief in a crucified Redeemer ; but for their private devotion and spiritual advantage. It helps them to bear perpetually in mind the death and passion of Christ. It assists them to nourish in their souls

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\* *Gal. C. vi. V. 14.*

the three divine virtues of faith, hope, and charity. In the first place, faith is exercised, because the sign of the Cross recalls to our remembrance one of the fundamental articles of Christian doctrine; for it proclaims to us that the Son of God the second person of the Holy Trinity, took upon himself our human nature, and died upon the Cross for our salvation. In the second place, it nourishes and fortifies our hope: because this holy sign continually reminds us of the passion, and the blood of Christ, on which the Christian reposes all his hope for grace at present; and for mercy, and for happiness hereafter. In the third place, charity, or the love of God, is enkindled in us by this sacred emblem, which represents to us that ardent affection of the Almighty, for us poor sinners, since he sent down from heaven, his well beloved Son to bleed upon the Cross, and thus rescue us from an eternity of punishment.

**XI.—THE MANNER OF MAKING THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.**

In blessing ourselves, we form the sign of the Cross by lifting our right hand to the forehead, and afterwards drawing as it were a line to the stomach, and then another line crossing the former from the left shoulder to the right: but to attach a meaning to the action, we pronounce, whilst performing it, these words:—‘In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’

Thus we publish a solemn declaration of our faith in the blessed and undivided Trinity. The pastor who imparts his benediction to his flock, or whilst dedicating any thing to the service of the altar, or to sacred purposes, forms a Cross in the air, with his right hand extended towards the object he is going to bless. Another mode of making this sign is practised, especially by priest and people at the celebration of Mass, just before the reading of the Gospel. It is then customary to sign, with a distinct Cross, the brow, the lips, and the bosom.

Amongst the Greeks and Oriental Christians, the sign of the Cross occurs as often in their respective liturgies, and is in as familiar use as in the Latin Church. A slight, but immaterial difference, however, exists between the two modes now employed by the members of the Western and Eastern Churches, in signing themselves with this emblem of Christ's atonement. The Greeks, first of all extending and uniting together the thumb and first two fingers of the right hand, and pressing the remaining two upon the palm, make the sign of the Cross by touching with the three united fingers, thus joined to signify one God and three distinct persons, first, the forehead, then the breast; and afterwards conduct the hand, not to the left shoulder as we at present do, but on the contrary, to the right, and ultimately to the left, repeating the form of words employed by the

**Latins.\*** Up to the middle of the fifteenth century, the same method was likewise employed throughout the Latin Church, as we may collect from a variety of sources. Pope Innocent III. (A. D. 1198) notices the manner which was generally followed in his time, and says;—‘The sign of the Cross is to be made with three fingers, so that it may descend from top to bottom, and then pass over from right to left :† but the pontiff adds; ‘Some persons however draw the sign of the Cross from left to right.’‡

To these may be superadded many pictorial documents which attest this fact with regard to England and the other portions of the Western Church. In the pictures executed anterior to the year 1500 ;§ in the illumination of ancient manu-

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\* Χρεωστῇ ὁ καθείς ἐνσεβῆς χριστιανὸς πρῶτα μὲν νὰ συμμάζῃ τὰ τρία τοῦ δακτυλῶν δια τὴν ἁγίαν Τρίαδα, τὸν μεγάλον δακτύλον καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους δύο ὅπου εἶναι κοντάτου, ἔπειτα πρῶτον μὲν νὰ τὰ θέσῃ εἰς τὸ βλέφαρόν του δευτέρου εἰς τὴν κοιλίαν του, τρίτον εἰς τὸν δεξιὸν ὤμον, καὶ τετάρτον εἰς τὸν ἄρβον ὤμον.—*Damascenus Hypodiconus Thessalonicensis, Serm. xxv.*

† Signum Crucis tribus digitis exprimendum est, ita ut a superiori descendat in inferius, et a dextera transeat ad sinistram.—*De Mysteriorum Missæ, lib. ii. c. 45.*

‡ Quidam tamen signum Crucis a sinistra producant in dexteram.—*Ibid.*

§ The earl of Shrewsbury has, in his splendid collection at Alton Towers, two beautiful specimens of the ancient Flemish School; one by John Van Eyck, (A. D. 1370) and

scripts; in the beautiful stained-glass windows which throw such splendour round our English cathedrals; on the sepulchral monuments that adorn their walls and pillared aisles ;\* and in the official seals of religious houses, cities and corporations, may be observed figures, sometimes that of our blessed Redeemer, at others, of the patron-saint of that particular town, or church, or monastery, giving the blessing just as the Greek hierarchy do at present.†

We impress the sign of the Cross upon the forehead, not only in reference to that mystic Tau, which, on the day of judgment, will be the charac-

the other by Hemmelinck, (A. D. 1450). In the first, St. John the Evangelist is making the sign of the Cross over a poisoned cup: in the second, the infant Jesus is giving his blessing to a kneeling figure, in the manner first described—with the thumb and first two fingers erect and united, and the other two compressed upon the palm of the hand. Numerous instances also occur in the ancient mosaics in the churches at Rome, as may be verified by consulting Ciampini, *Vetera Monimenta*.

\* See the tombs in the *Cathedral Antiquities* by Britton, for many instances of this. The statue in Exeter cathedral of Simon di Apulia, which we have given at No. 42, Chap. xii. on vestments, is an example.

† Honorius, in *Gemma Animæ*, Pope Innocent, and other mystic writers, all agree in assigning the same spiritual meaning to this way of making the sign of the Cross. It is intended to express the mystery of the blessed Trinity.

teristic of divine election, to distinguish the favourites of heaven from the objects of its vengeance; but to manifest a desire that the wisdom of the Cross may beam upon and illuminate the darkness of our minds, and make us understand the words of God which are about to be spoken to us. It is imprinted on the mouth, in order to bring to our remembrance that saying of the Royal Prophet ;—‘ Let a watch, O Lord, be before my mouth: and a door round about my lips :’\*—and to instruct us to keep such a guard upon our tongue, that it may never utter anything irreverent towards God, or uncharitable towards our neighbour. It is signed upon the bosom in order to banish from the heart every disorderly affection, every dangerous inclination, and every sentiment of pride or vanity that ill become the followers of Jesus ;—‘ Who humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.’†

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\* *Psalm* cxl. V. 3. Protest. Translation, *Psalm* cxli.

† *Phil. C.* ii. V. 8, 9.

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## CHAPTER X.

### ON IMAGES.

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## PART THE SECOND.

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### CHAPTER X.

#### ON IMAGES.

##### I.—THE USE OF IMAGES IN THE HOUSE OF GOD AUTHORIZED BY SCRIPTURE.

THE practice of employing images as ornaments and memorials to decorate the temples of the Lord, is in a most especial manner approved by the word of God himself. Moses was commanded to place two cherubim upon the ark,\* and to set up a brazen figure of the fiery serpent, that those among the murmuring Israelites who had been bitten, might recover from the poison of their wounds by looking on the image.† In the description of Solomon's temple, we read of that prince, not only that he made in the Oracle, two cherubim of olive tree, of ten cubits in height:‡ but that 'all the walls of the temple round about he carved with divers figures and carvings.'§

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\* *Exod. C. xxv. & xxvi.*

† *Numb. C. xxi. V. 8.*

‡ *3 Kings, C. vi. V. 28. Protest. Vers. 1 Kings. § Ib. V. 29.*

In the first book of Paralipomenon, we observe that when David imposed his injunction upon Solomon to realize his intention of building the house of the Lord, he delivered to him a description of the porch and temple, and concluded by thus assuring him ;—‘ All these things came to me written by the hand of the Lord, that I might understand all the works of the pattern.’\*

The isolated fact, that images were not only directed by Almighty God to be placed in the Mosaic tabernacle, and in the more sumptuous temple of Jerusalem, but that he himself exhibited the pattern of them, will be alone sufficient to authorize the practice of the Catholic Church in regard to a similar observance.

#### II.—RECOMMENDED BY ANTIQUITY.

A venerable antiquity instructs the Catholic to ornament with paintings and crosses, those places which religion has dedicated to the public worship. The primitive Christians were studious to represent a variety of subjects selected from the scriptures, or allusive to their holy religion, upon the walls of those subterranean oratories to which they were accustomed to resort in times of persecution. These paintings still remain visible at the present day ; and as they possess an inestimable

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\* *Paralipomenon*, C. xxviii. V. 11-19. Protest. Version, 1 *Kings*.

value in the eyes of the pious Christian, of the artist, and the theologian, they have been copied and illustrated by several learned writers.\*

It is demonstrated by D'Agincourt that some of them are the productions of the second century. He arrived at the conclusion by comparing together the fresco paintings of the sepulchre of the Nasoni family, with those which decorate the catacombs that have been discovered in the neighbourhood of Rome, particularly on the Latin and Salarian ways. This able antiquary indentifies the style of painting in several of the Christian cemeteries, with that of the heathen sepulchre ; and observes a similar elegance, grace, and correctness of design, manifested in the various subjects which severally adorn these Gentile and Christian burial places ; and hence, he justly concludes the paintings of both to

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\* Bosio was one amongst the first to notice them. The labours of that zealous ecclesiastical antiquary, were rendered still more valuable by the learning brought to a new arrangement of his book, and the addition of many important observations made to it by Aringhi, in his new edition of the '*Roma Subterranea*.' The learned prelate Bottari afterwards treated the same subject with his usual ability ; and shed a new lustre over it by his elegance, and archaological erudition. D'Agincourt, in his invaluable work, '*l'Histoire de l'Art par les Monumens*,' derived much assistance, and extracted a variety of materials for the compilation of his book, from the fresco paintings of the Roman catacombs.

be the productions of contemporary artists.\* The antiquity of the pictures in the Christian cemeteries, is also established by the fact that in many instances, they have been cut through, in order to make niches in the walls which they ornamented, for the bodies of the martyrs: an incident which demonstrates that they were finished anterior to the latter persecutions endured by the Church.

It should not be forgotten that these subterranean chambers, in which were deposited the bodies of the martyrs, served the double purpose of dormitories for the dead, and churches in which the living assembled to pray and celebrate the sacrifice of the Mass, upon the very tombs of their heroic brethren. These ancient paintings triumphantly refute the assertions of Bingham, who labours hard to prove that—‘no pictures or images were allowed in the churches for the first three hundred years:’ and that they were—‘first brought in by Paulinus and his contemporaries, privately

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† See *D'Agincourt*, Vol. iv. Tab. 6, and Vol. vi. Tab. 6. Concerning the paintings in the Roman catacombs, Flaxman, who studied at Rome several years, observes;—‘Even during the reign of those emperors by whom the Christians were cruelly persecuted, when they were obliged to perform their sacred worship in subterrains and sepulchral chambers, they ornamented those retreats with sacred portraits and subjects from Scripture.’—*Flaxman's Lectures on Sculpture*, p. 302.

and by degrees in the latter end of the fourth century.\*

What Bingham is pleased to designate the beginning, was, however, only the extension of an ancient practice.† It is certain that the Christians, from the

\* *Book viii. Sect. 6 & 7.*

On many occasions Protestant writers, explicitly, though unintentionally admit that the use of pictures in churches prevailed at the earliest periods of Christianity. Dr. Russell, whose book on Egypt was just now noticed, while speaking of the architectural remains which still adorn the great Oasis, remarks ;—‘ In regard to what appeared at first as the ruins of an Arab town, we are informed, that upon a closer examination, it proved to be a necropolis or cemetery, consisting of a great variety of buildings, not fewer than two or three hundred, each the receptacle of a number of mummies.\*\*\*\* One building in particular, is divided into aisles like our churches ; and that it has been used as such by the early Christians, is clearly evinced by the traces of saints painted on the walls.’—*View of ancient and modern Egypt*, pp. 396 & 397.

† Canon xxxvi. of the Provincial Council held in 305 at Eliberis, in Spain, immediately refutes the error of Bingham. The pastors of the Spanish Church beheld the grievous persecution that Dioclesian had commenced to wage against the Christian faith, which had for a lengthened period enjoyed comparative repose, under the forbearing reign of Constantius Cæsar, father of Constantine the Great. They assembled to concert precautionary measures, and, amongst other things, they determined that in the provinces under their immediate jurisdiction,

earliest epoch, were careful to ornament with pictures, according to their humble means, those cham-

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there should be no fixed and immoveable pictorial monuments, such as fresco-paintings or mosaics ; no images of Christ whom they adored, nor of the saints whom they venerated, on the walls of the churches which had been erected and ornamented during the long interval of peace which the Christians had enjoyed. 'Placuit,' says the council, 'picturas in ecclesia esse non debere ne quod colitur et adoratur, in parietibus depingatur. (*Conc. Elib. apud Labbeum, tom. i. p. 972.*) This economy was prudent, and adapted to the exigency of the period: the figures of Christ and of his saints were thus protected from the ribaldry and insult of the Pagans. But this well-timed prohibition demonstrates that the use of pictures and images had been already introduced into the Spanish Church. That they were equally employed in other Churches, is evident. With regard to Africa, we have the authority of Tertullian, (*de Pudicitia*) who particularly instances the figure of the good shepherd, which was almost invariably to be observed upon the chalices. The catacombs of Rome will sufficiently indicate what was the practice of the Christians in the imperial metropolis, by exhibiting so many sepulchral chambers, used also as chapels, which are entirely covered with fresco paintings, ascertained to have been executed a long time previous to the epoch assigned by Bingham, from having been damaged when, in the heat of some persecution, the faithful were necessitated, notwithstanding the consequent destruction of the painting, to pierce the walls on which they were designed, with niches, to entomb the remains of the martyred saints.

bers that were dedicated to religious uses for the common benefit. During the first three centuries, these halls were comparatively private chapels. But the same style of decoration continued to be followed, when Christianity was recognized as the religion of the state ; and the obscure and retired oratories of the faithful became the public sanctuaries of their triumphant worship, openly resorted to without dread or molestation.

At this period, when peace was given to the Church by the accession of Constantine to the throne of the Cæsars, the temples of the Christians were ornamented with tenfold splendour ; and not only painting, but her sister arts, sculpture and architecture, with their respective handmaids, were invited to celebrate the victory, and adorn the triumph of Christian faith.

### III.—WHY THE CHURCH EMPLOYS THEM.

It cannot be denied that the image of Jesus Christ, suspended from the cross, must awaken in our minds the most affecting remembrance of Him ‘ Who hath loved us so, as to deliver himself up to death for our sakes.’\* As long as the religious sentiments created by this image, keep possession of the mind, we are naturally prompted to manifest, by some exterior token, the ardour of that grateful piety, with which the heart is glowing ; and

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\* *Gal. C. ii.*

while we humble ourselves in presence of the image, we express our love, and testify our submission, towards its glorious and heavenly original. Such is the idea of the Church, as we may collect from the Council of Trent,\* where she thus admonishes her people:—‘The honour which we give to images, is referred to their prototypes or originals; so that, by the images which we kiss, or before which we bow or uncover our heads, we adore Christ.’ In reality, the spirit of the Church, in honouring images, may be ascertained from the motives which induce her to exhibit a respect to the Cross and the book of the Gospels. It must be evident to every one, that by kneeling before

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† Mandat, sancta synodus omnibus Episcopis et cæteris, ut juxta Catholicæ et Apostolicæ Ecclesiæ usum, a primævis Christianæ religionis temporibus receptum, de legitimo imaginum usu fideles diligenter instruant, docentes eos, imagines Christi et Deiparæ Virginis, et aliorum sanctorum, in templis præsertim habendas et retinendas, eisque debitum honorem et venerationem impertiendam; non quod credatur inesse aliqua in iis divinitas, vel virtus, propter quam sint colendæ; vel quod ab eis sit aliquid petendum; vel quod fiducia in imaginibus sit figenda, veluti olim fiebat a gentibus, quæ in idolis (*Psal.cxxxiv.*) spem suam collocabant: sed quoniam honos, qui eis exhibetur, refertur ad prototypa, quæ illæ repræsentant: ita ut per imagines, quas osculamur, et coram quibus caput aperimus et procumbimus, Christum adoremus; et sanctos, quorum illæ similitudinem gerunt, veneremur.—*Sessio xxv. de Invoc. Sanct. et Sacris Imagin.*



the Cross, we adore him ' who his ownself bore our sins in his body upon the tree.\*' If we stand up, from motives of respect when the book of the Gospels is carried past us, or when any portion of it be recited ; if we kiss it in a court of justice, or during the celebration of mass ; if we carry lights before it, or perfume it with incense, such attributes of religious honour are not rendered to a piece of wood, but to him who died upon the Cross to save us ; not to the ink and paper of a book, but to the word of God, and those eternal truths which are propounded to us in the sacred volume.†

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\* 1 *Peter*, C. ii. V. 24.

† That long before the Council of Trent was assembled, precisely the same doctrine as that delivered in one of its decrees just noticed, was inculcated with much solicitude by the pastors of the English Catholic Church, previous to what, by a misnomer, has been called the Reformation, is manifest from their writing. Lyndwood, who affixed some learned annotations to the collection which he published in 1422, of the Constitutions promulgated at different epochs by the several archbishops of Canterbury, passes the following remark upon the use of images :—  
 ' Ipsarum tamen imaginum pictura non est adoranda, sed res per ipsam repræsentata ; sicut patet. Et nota, quod triplex fuit ratio institutionis imaginum : una est ad instructionem rudium, qui eis quasi quibusdam libris edoceri videntur. Secunda est, ut incarnationis mysterium, et sanctorum exempla magis in memoria nostra essent, dum quotidie oculis nostris repræsentantur. Tertia est ad ex-

We Catholics adorn our altars and our churches with the pictures and images of Christ, and his sainted servants ; and preserve them with decent, but with pious respect, not only through a reverence for their illustrious prototypes, but that the sight of them may recal to our remembrance those heroic virtues which made their lives so celebrated, and quicken us, if not to emulate, at least to follow their example at an humble distance, by some faint imitation of their holiness.

The loyal subject, or the patriot, who ornaments his residence with the portrait of his sovereign, or of those, amongst his fellow-citizens, whose achievements in the field, or whose abilities in the senate, however infamous a character they may have borne through private life, have won for them the admiration of their countrymen ; cannot surely advance any reasonable objection against the conduct of the Catholic, for rendering, in his churches, a similar homage to the ‘author and finisher of his faith, Christ Jesus,’\* and to such amongst his disciples as have shed a glory round his religion, by the lustre of their brilliant virtues ; or have carried the tidings of it to the heathen, and recorded, with their life-blood, in presence of

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citandum devotionis affectum, quæ ex visis efficacius excitatur quam ex auditis.’—*Lyndwood, Provinciale*, p. 252.

\* *Heb. C. xii. V. 2.*

the tyrant and the persecutor, their intrepid adherence to all its doctrines.

That pictures and images, in churches, are particularly serviceable in informing the minds of the humbler classes, and, for such a purport, possess a superiority over words themselves, is certain :—

‘ Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem,  
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus, et quæ  
Ipse sibi tradit spectator.’\*

What’s through the ear convey’d, will never find  
Its way, with so much quickness, to the mind,  
As that, when faithful eyes are messengers,  
Unto himself the fix’d spectator bears.

The remark of a heathen poet is corroborated by the observations of the most celebrated amongst ancient and modern Christian writers.† So per-

\* *Horatius, de Arte Poetica, v. 180.*

† That what is now quite harmless, was, half a century ago, intrinsically evil, will require much logical acumen, and some eloquence, to demonstrate. Not many years since, Barry the Artist, volunteered to enliven the drear and gloomy walls of St. Paul’s Cathedral with paintings; but his generous offer was rejected by the dean and chapter of the metropolitan cathedral.

This instance ought not to awaken our astonishment. With writers of the Protestant communion, it has always been a favourite occupation to stigmatize their Catholic fellow-countryman, most unjustly, as’ the worshipper of a wooden God,—a crucifix, and to denounce his religion, the olden faith, as damnable and idolatrous,—no gen-

suaded was St. Paulinus of Nola, fourteen hundred years ago, of the efficacy possessed by paintings for conveying useful lessons of instruction, that he adorned, with a variety of sacred subjects, the walls of the church which he erected, and dedicated to God in honour of St. Felix :—

‘ Propterea visum nobis opus utile cunctis  
Felicis domibus pictura ludere sancta,’ &c.\*

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tle epithets. It was this profound abhorrence, hitherto manifested by the heads of the English Protestant establishment, against ornamenting the temple of the Lord with statues and pictures, that defeated the laudable proposal of this meritorious British artist. But how men and men's ideas are changing. This very Church of England is now busily adorning her pinnacles and domes and steeples with refulgent crosses, and ornamenting her communion-tables and her chancel-windows with pictorial images. Keeping out of sight the moral and religious instruction capable of being conveyed immediately to the hearts and understanding of the most illiterate amongst the humbler classes, by the medium of painting and sculpture ; and merely feeling as an Englishman, fond of the arts, and wishful that his native land may soon achieve as much renown by her successful cultivation of them, as she has won by her proficiency in every other art, as well as in literature and in the sciences, the writer most sincerely rejoices at this change in the sentiments of the dignitaries of the Protestant establishment. Though this ray of new light be but feeble, still he hails it as the harbinger of a splendid dawn, that shall herald a brilliant era in the British school of art.

\* *D. Paulinus, Natal. 9, S. Felicis.*

To us it seem'd a useful work to paint,  
With sacred scenes, the temple of this saint.

Prudentius assures us how much his devotion was enkindled as he gazed upon the sufferings of the martyrs, so feelingly depicted around their tombs, and in their churches. On his way to Rome, about the year 405, the poet paid a visit to the shrine of St. Cassianus,\* at Forum Cornelii, the modern Imola, where the body of that Christian hero reposed, under a splendid altar, over which were represented, in an expressive picture, all the sufferings of his cruel martyrdom. So moved was Prudentius, that he threw himself prostrate upon the pavement,—kissed the altar with religious reverence,—and numbering up, with many a tear, those wounds that sin had inflicted upon his soul, concluded by exhorting every one to unite with himself in entrusting their petitions for the divine clemency, to the solicitude of the holy martyr Cassianus, who not only hears our request, but will afford us the benefit of his patronage.

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\* He was a school-master, and suffered death for the Catholic religion under Julian the Apostate. His own scholars were selected to be the executioners of his martyrdom. The youths were directed to surround and stab their teacher with their styles, or metal pens, with which, as was then the custom, they learned to write upon little tablets of wood, covered with wax. His body is still venerated at Imola, under the high-altar of the cathedral.

'Stratus humi, tumulo adolvebar, quem sacer ornat  
 Martyr dicato Cassianus corpore.  
 Dum lacrymans mecum reputo mea vulnera, et omnes  
 Vitæ labores, ac dolorum acumina  
 Erexī ad cœlum faciem; stetit obvia contra  
 Fucis colorum picta imago martyris,  
 Plagas mille gerens, totos lacerata per artus.\*  
 Prone to the ground, the sacred tomb I press'd,  
 That holy Cassian's bones were tenanting.  
 With many a tear my sorrow I express'd  
 For all my sins, as grief my heart did wring.  
 Upwards I gaz'd,—before me shone the scene  
 Wrought in fair colours by the painter's art,  
 That told so well the cruel martyring  
 Of blessed Cassian, by the school-boys' dar.

Arrived at Rome, Prudentius observed and applauded the piety which induced its citizens to ornament the tombs of the martyrs. The church of St. Hippolytus particularly attracted the poet's attention, and he has described, with much minuteness, the paintings which decorated that Christian hero's tomb.

'Exempla sceleris paries habet illius in quo  
 Multicolor fœus digerit omne nefas.  
 Picta super tumulum species liquidis viget umbris  
 Effigians tracti membra cruenta viri.†  
 The painted wall, with many a tint that glows,  
 Reveals the horror of the impious deed,  
 And o'er his tomb proclaims the martyr's throes,  
 Imaging each tortur'd limb to bleed.‡

\* *Hymn ix. Peristeph. v. 5, &c.*

† Prudentius, *Hymn. xi. Peristeph. Hippolyti*, 123. We have before noticed the writings of Prudentius, and particularly this hymn, *pp.* 342, 379.

‡ From these passages in the hymns composed by Pru-

## IV.—RELIGIOUS FEELINGS CAUSED BY IMAGES.

Not only can sculpture and painting furnish the knowledge, and exhibit the detailed account of every fact recorded in the Old and New Testaments, to the man who cannot read ; but not unfrequently the eye, by their assistance, conveys to the imagination a more impressive and accurate idea than could be imprinted by a perusal of the passage itself in which it is registered ; or by listening attentively to a disquisition on the subject from some learned commentator.

This is particularly applicable with regard to the crucifix. That virgin brow of Christ enwreathed with thorns ;—those lips disparted, not with plaintiveness, but sighing forth a supplication, and a pardon, for his executioners, with their

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dentius, it may be collected, that anterior to the fifth century was introduced the custom of decorating the tombs of the martyrs with paintings, and of suspending what in modern language is denominated an altar-piece, above the altar where their relics were enshrined and mass was celebrated. Noticing the above verses, extracted from the hymn on St. Hippolytus, a Protestant French writer, Le Clerc, passes the following remark :—‘ It ought to be observed, that upon the grave there was a table, or an altar, on which they celebrated the Eucharist, (v. 170) so that the image was placed precisely upon the altar, where they are wont to place images now in the Church of Rome.’—*Le Clerc, Lives of Primitive Fathers, in Prudentius, p. 316, 317.*

latest breath ;—that serenity of agonizing painfulness ?—those feet and hands bored through with rugged nails ;—that blood, welling from his open side ; and, as we stand gazing on the ‘ Word made flesh,’ those whispers of the still inward voice of conscience, that upbraid us ;—I too joined to crucify my God ! Yes, all this possesses a sad, a silent, but a powerful eloquence, that speaks to the heart of the most giddy worldling ; and finds its way to the intelligence of the learned philosopher, as well as to the comprehension of the lowly uneducated rustic.\*

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\* How inferior in pathetic expression, and how much less capable of awakening sympathy in the heart of the spectator, are the sublimest specimens of classic Grecian sculpture, when put in comparison with innumerable productions of the Christian artist’s chisel. The weeping Niobe—the almost childless mother—stands motionless with grief amid the scene of desolation, with her youngest child, a girl, clinging round her knees, the last of many sons and daughters dead around her : the Laocoon writhes as the serpent’s poison is envenoming his blood in every vein, and he hears the wailings and the cries for help that are ejaculated by his sons, without the power to succour them, or scare away the monsters that entwine their deadly coil around them all. But both of these justly celebrated groups fall infinitely short of the agonizing, yet undisturbed and serene expression, legible on many a figure of our crucified Redeemer. The Niobe exhibits a countenance that is beautiful, indeed, and expressive of much grief, but that is all. The expressions of the Lao-



There are few persons, however slightly familiar with the productions of the fine arts, who do not call up before their imagination, during a perusal of the sacred volume, those paintings and sculptures they have seen illustrative of the subject : or on contemplating a sacred picture, or a basso-relievo, do not recollect the part of Scripture which suggested it. This is, indeed, only natural, for sculpture and painting are but the translations of ideas, or of language, into forms and colours.

V.—OBJECTION AGAINST THE USE OF IMAGES ANSWERED.

To such a custom, some have raised objections and have noticed a precept in the Decalogue in

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coon's head and figure are indicative of personal concern ; they exclude every other feeling but that for self : no father's eye, beaming parental tenderness through tears, is cast down on either of two sons, moaning for a father's help : no arm is outstretched to tear the reptile from his boys, but both his hands are employed in grappling with the serpent that is about to inflict a second wound upon his own person. Upon the sacred features of our blessed Saviour there are stamped, indeed, the throes and tortures of suffering humanity, but they are overmastered by the divine nature which beams out through all the countenance, and lights it up with every characteristic of heavenly love—forgiveness—patient resignation—ideal, angelic beauty, that announce a God-man expiring under the severest torments, but undisturbed, and sighing out a prayer with his latest breath, to obtain a pardon from his Father for his murderers.

support of their hostility. The commandment however does not prohibit the making of images ; for if it really did, God would have been the first to violate his own injunctions, by directing Moses to make, and set up the figures of the cherubim ; but what it forbids, is the making of idols, that is, images to be adored and served as gods. Such a caution was necessary for the Hebrew people, surrounded as they were by nations that followed the most ridiculous idolatry. Thus the Canaanians worshipped the sun, and moon, and stars ; an ox was the principal amongst the Egyptian deities ; some of which were mice, and even beetles ; and the Philistine would arise from his worship of Dagon, to pay his adoration to serpents and to fishes.

VI.—NO VIRTUE RESIDENT IN IMAGES THEMSELVES.

Not only are Catholics not exposed to such dangers, but they are expressly prohibited by the Church,\* to believe that there is any divinity, or virtue resident in images, for which they should be revered, or that any thing is to be asked of them, or any confidence placed in them ; but, that the honour given should be referred to those whom they represent ; and so particular are their religious instructors in impressing this truth upon the minds

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\* Concilium Tridentinum, *Sessione* xxv. just now quoted, p. 542.

of their congregations, that if a Catholic child, who had learned its first catechism, were asked if it were permitted to pray to images, the child would answer ;—‘ no, by no means ; for they have no life, nor sense to help us :’ and the pastor who discovered any one rendering any portion of that respect, which belongs to God alone, to a crucifix, or to a picture, would have no hesitation in breaking the one, and tearing the other into shreds, and throwing the fragments into the flames ; in imitation of Ezechias, who broke the brazen serpent, on account of the superstitious reverence which the Israelites manifested towards it.

VII.—THE USE OF IMAGES DEFENDED BY SIR HUMPHRY DAVY.

That celebrated philosopher, Sir Humphry Davy, in his ‘ Consolations in Travel,’ puts into the mouth of his Catholic friend Ambrosio, the following remark in his reply to the objections urged against Christianity by the sceptic Onuphrio ; —‘ It seemed as if the grossness of our material senses, required some assistance from the eye, in fixing or perpetuating the character of religious instinct ; and the Church to which I belong, and I may say the whole Christian Church in early times, allowed visible images, pictures, statues, and relics, as the means of awakening the stronger devotional feelings.

‘ We have been accused of worshipping merely inanimate objects, but this is a very false notion of the nature of our faith ; we regard them merely as vivid characters representing spiritual existencies, and we no more worship them than the Protestant does his Bible, when he kisses it under a solemn religious adjuration.’\*

VIII.—ANCIENT CUSTOM IN ENGLAND.

In our old churches, built in Catholic times, there was a gallery which ran across the nave, at the entrance of the choir or chancel, and received the appellation of rood-loft, from the circumstance that a great crucifix, or, as it was anciently denominated, Rood, was always erected there, with its front looking towards the people.

But the iconoclastic mania, which, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, unhappily infected the inhabitants of our islands, quickened their zeal against images into fury, and stimulated them to vie with, nay surpass, the Goth and Vandal in dilapidation and barbarism. In England, and Ireland, and Scotland, the crucifix was precipitated from its pinnacle upon the screen, and its niche within the chancel; the costly and elaborate shrine was broken down and desecrated; the statue of

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\* ‘ *Consolations in Travel, or the last days of a Philosopher,*’ by Sir Humphry Davy, p. 80.

‘ the Mother of our Lord,’\* was hurled, by generations that did *not* call her blessed,† from its fretted canopy ; the pictorial image of the apostle, or the patron-saint, was shattered as it glowed upon the rich and storied window that shed a moral light—a light of virtue and of holiness upon the heart and understanding, as well as poured its rays upon the eye of him who entered our venerable churches and cathedrals. Thus was for ever obliterated a precious and a brilliant page in the annals of British arts and cultivation. This mania, however, did not lay hold on Luther, the Father of the miscalled Reformation ; nor has it yet infatuated any of the followers of the innovator’s doctrines. The traveller in Germany will be very often at a loss to decide, at his first entrance into what is in reality a Lutheran place of worship, whether it be not a Catholic instead of a Protestant church, for he will observe the crucifix and lights, arranged precisely according to the Catholic ritual, upon the communion table.‡

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\* *St. Luke, C. i. V. 43.*

† *Ib. V. 48.*

‡ The writer, on entering the beautiful old Gothic pile of St. Sebald’s at Nuremberg, now in possession of the Lutherans, could not, for some minutes, determine whether it were a Catholic church, or dedicated to the Protestant form of worship. A handsome crucifix, and lofty bronze candlesticks, with wax-tapers burning, were conspicuous on the ancient altar ; folding pictures, then unclosed, repre-

The rood or crucifix was taken down from the churches throughout England, in consequence of an order to that effect issued by the government in the year 1548, and from that period the royal arms have been substituted for the Cross of Jesus; and in many places, the lion and the fabled unicorn occupy the precise spot, where, in olden time, might be observed the more appropriate device of Christianity, the image of our bleeding Saviour.\*

IX.—INCONSISTENCY OF PROTESTANTISM.

It is curious to observe the infatuation of prejudice. Such portions of the word of God as bore the appearance of condemning the custom of employing images, were eagerly selected and written on the walls of the church by those very persons who, immediately after, set up the figures of Moses and Aaron holding the tables of the Law, which it was pretended, contained the prohibition; and who removed the crucifix, in order to substitute in its place the insignia of royalty; or, in other words, who pulled down the symbol of Jesus, and

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senting the B. V. Mary with the sacred infant, and subjects from Scripture, and the saints' lives, ornamented the walls and pillars. What principally enabled him, at last, to decide that the church was not then a Catholic one, was the absence of a tabernacle for the blessed Eucharist.

\* See an '*Elucidation of the principles of English Architecture*,' by John Kendall, Exeter, 1818.

the sign of his humility, to make room for the symbol of a man, and the emblem of worldly grandeur. James I. was so forcibly struck with this impropriety, that he observed to the Scottish bishops who objected to his ornamenting his chapel at Edinburgh, with statues and paintings ;—‘ You can endure lions, and dragons, (the supporters of the royal arms) and devils, (the armorial griffins of Queen Elizabeth) to be figured in your churches, but will not allow the like place to patriarchs and prophets.’\* Protestants can discern in various texts a condemnation of the Catholic custom of adorning their churches with paintings and statues ; and yet, in total disregard of their own principles, they embellish their Common Prayer books with many images of the saints. The writer has in his possession a book of Common Prayer,† decorated with a number of such engravings. That man must be endowed with most penetrating logical acumen, who can distinguish it to be idolatrous, and contradictory to Scripture, to ornament with images the temple we pray *in*, but perfectly harmless, nay useful, to do so with regard to the book we pray *from*.

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\* *Spotswood's History*, p. 530.

† Printed by the assigns of T. Newcomb and H. Hills, printers to the Queen's (Ann) most excellent Majesty, 1711.

## X.—ON THE DIVISION OF THE DECALOGUE.

It may be proper to observe that both Catholics and Protestants receive the ten commandments as they are delivered in Exodus and Deuteronomy, though they differ in the manner of arranging them. The commandment which, according to the Catholic enumeration, is considered as the first, is improperly divided into two precepts by Protestants; and those two really distinct precepts which, in the Protestant division of the Decalogue, are condensed into one,—the tenth commandment—the Catholic Church more properly separates into two, the ninth and tenth.\* Hence it not unfrequently

*\* First Commandment in the Catholic division of the Decalogue.*

I. Thou shalt not have strange gods in my sight. Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing, nor the likeness of any things that are in heaven above, or that are in the earth beneath, or that abide in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not adore them, and thou shalt not serve them. For I am the Lord thy God, a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon their children unto the third and fourth generation to them that hate me. And shewing mercy

*\* First and second Commandments in the Protestant division of the Decalogue.*

I. Thou shalt have none other Gods but me.

II. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them; for I the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shew mercy unto thousands in



happens amongst Protestants, even of intelligence and information, that we are accused of omitting the second commandment, to apologize for our pretended worship of idols. The Scripture, however, while it assures us, that the words of the Law were ten,\* no where furnishes us with the manner in which they were divided. The division therefore of the Decalogue is left to the Church, and is in itself a matter of inferior importance. The Catholics, with St. Clement of Alexandria, St. Augustin, and St. Jerom, divide the commandments into two parts, as given by God to Moses on two tablets of stone; on the first table were written the first three, which prescribe the worship of God, and the sanctification of the Sabbath, or day of rest; on the other table were engraven the remaining seven, which expound the duty of men to each other. This division is

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unto many thousands to them  
that love me, and keep my com-  
mandments.

them that love me, and keep my  
commandments.

*Ninth and tenth Commandments in the Catholic division of the Decalogue.*

IX. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.

*Tenth Commandment in the Protestant division of the Decalogue.*

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.

\* *Deut. C. iv. V. 13.*

to be preferred to that made by Origen, which assigns four to the first table, and six to the second. First, because, the prohibition to make idols, or to adore them, is an explanation and consequence of adoring one only true God, and not having strange Gods before him, and should therefore be joined with it. Secondly, because, as the sixth commandment, which forbids the outward crime of adultery, is different from the seventh, which tells us not to steal our neighbour's goods; so in like manner, the ninth, which prohibits the sin of desiring our neighbour's wife, is properly separated from the tenth, in which we are forbidden to covet any part of his possessions.\*

These cursory observations, it is trusted, will disabuse the reader of any erroneous preconceptions he may heretofore have entertained concerning the doctrine and the practice of the Catholic Church, in the employment of images. Such observations will have helped him to detect the calumnious accusations of those amongst her adversaries who unhesitatingly prefer against her, without having ascertained the truth of their denunciation, the serious charge of having mutilated and abridged the decalogue,† in order to keep out

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\* See *Deuteronomy*, C. v. V. 21; also Septuagint version of Exodus.

† That up to the change in religion, the ten commandments were taught, and divided in the same way as at

of sight a condemnation of her idolatry ; for such is the language which some zealots employ to de-

present, by Catholics all over the world ; and that the division now in use amongst English Protestants, was introduced, not immediately along with the new religion, but some years after, are facts that may be easily substantiated.

There is a very curious and scarce work entitled *Dives et Pauper*, at the end of which is inserted the following explanation of its contents : “ Here endeth a compendyouse treatyse dyalogue of Dives and Pauper. That is to say, the ryche and the poore.

‘ treatynge upon the X cōmaundementes, fynysshed the iij daye of Decembre. The yere of our lorde god M.CCCC.LXXXXVI. Empretyd by me Wynkyn de Worde at Westmonstre. Deo Gracias.’

In this work, the first and second commandments are enumerated in the following words and order :—

‘ Here begynneth the fyrste comaundemente. *Dives*. In the fyrste commaundemente, as I have lerned, God sayth thus : Thou shalte have none other straunge goddes before me. Thou shalte make to the noo graven thynges, noo mawmeth, noo lykenesse that is in heven above, ne that is bynethe in erthe, ne of ony thynges that is in the water under therthe. Thou shalt not worship them with thy bodye outwarde, ne within thyn herte inwarde. Exodi xx. c.’ After a long explanation of the first commandment, he proceeds to the second, thus :—‘ In the seconde comaundement god byddeth that we sholde not take his name in vayne, for who so doth shall be gylty and shall not passe unpunysshed.’

This same method of dividing the commandments con-

signate a rite which is so harmless ; as if such an erasure in the commandments could justify the

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tinned several years after the expulsion of the ancient faith. This may be verified, in the first place, from a catechism drawn up by Erasmus and entitled :—‘ A playne and godly exposition or declaratiō of the comune Crede, (which in the Latyn tonge is called *Symbolum Apostolorum*) and of the X comaundements of goddes law, newly made and put forthe by the famous clerke, Mayster Erasmus of Roterdame, at the requeste of the moste honorable lorde, Thomas Erle of Wyltshyre, father to the most gracious and vertuous Quene Anne, wyfe to our moste gracious soverayne lorde kyng Henry the viij cum privilegio.

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| ‘ The fyrste<br>comaundement. | The fyrst precepte therefore is this,<br>Thou shalt not have any straūge goddes<br>in my syght, thou shalt not make the<br>any graven ymage, nor any maner, si-<br>militude or likenes, which is in the<br>fyrment above, or which is in the<br>earthe benethe, neyther of those thynges<br>whiche are in the waters under the<br>earthe. |
|-------------------------------|---|

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| ‘ The second<br>precept. | Thou shalt not take the name of<br>god in vayne. |
|--------------------------|--|

‘ Imprinted at London in Fletestrete, by Robert  
Redman.’

In the second place, we have the catechism arranged by Cranmer, in which the arch-reformer thus gives the commandments according to our present Catholic enumeration :—

‘ Catechismus. That is to say, a shorte instruction into

crime in the eyes of any Catholic, or tranquillize his conscience. They will have satisfied him, too,

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Christian religion, for the singular commoditie and prosper of childre and yong people. Set forth by the mooste reverende father in God, Thomas Arch-Byshop of Canterbury, Primate of all England, and metropolitane. Gwalterus Lynne excudebat.

*Folio v. vi. at the bottom.*

‘ 1548      These are the holy commaundementes of the  
Fol. vi.                      Lord our God.

‘ *The firste.*

‘ I am the Lorde thy God, thou shalt have none other  
Goddess but me.

‘ *The seconde.*

‘ Thou shalt not take the name,’ &c.

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‘ Fol. vii.

‘ *The nynthe.*

“ Thou shalt not covet thy neyghbours house.

‘ *The tenth.*

‘ Thou shalt not covet thy neyghbours wife,’ &c.

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‘ Fol. xix. 6.

‘ Ye have herd, good children, in the former sermon, that all maner of idolatrie is forbyd by this comaundement. Thou shalt have none other Gods but me. Where also it was declared unto you, howe you may commit spiritual ydolatrie, by over much fearynge, trustinge, and lovyng of creatures. But now I wyll speake of the most grosse ydolatrie which standeth in wourshyppynge of ymages, eyther of creatures or of God himselfe.

that instead of being forbidden, the use of images is positively recommended by the word of God ; and he will conclude that the utility of those religious memorials is evident, as they serve to call to our remembrance some of the most sacred mysteries taught by our religion—help to confine our thoughts from wandering at the time of prayer ; and, while they point towards heaven, read silently to us the sufferings, and the death upon the altar of the cross, of a God made man—our Jesus—our crucified Redeemer.

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‘ And this ydolatrie is forbyde by expresse wordes in this commaundement, where God sayeth thus :—

“Thou shalt make the no gravē ymage, nor ony lykeness of any thyng which is in heavē above or in earth benethe, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down unto it nor worship it.”

‘ These wordes, by most interpreters of late time, belonge to the first commaundement, although after the interpretation of manye aūtient autors they be the seconde commaundement,’ &c.

The commandments do not occur in the Book of Common Prayer published in 1549 ; but in the Communion service in the Common Prayer book printed in 1552, we find the Decalogue divided just as it is at present in Protestant Catechisms.

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## PART THE SECOND.

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### CHAPTER XI.

#### ON THE USE OF LIGHTS.

##### I.—LIGHTS COMMANDED TO BE USED IN THE JEWISH TABERNACLE.

THE use of lights in the service of the Jewish Temple, is a fact too well authenticated to require any proof. Such is the historical celebrity, both religious and profane, belonging to the seven-branched candlestick\* which the Almighty God himself commanded to be made, ' according to the

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\* The taking of Jerusalem by the Roman legions under Titus, was regarded as an occurrence of so much magnitude, that the honours of a public triumph were decreed, by the senate, to that imperial conqueror. Amongst the trophies of his victory which were selected to adorn this military pomp, the seven-branched candlestick belonging to the Jewish temple, was, by far, the most conspicuous. This is evidenced by the triumphal arch of Titus, which still exists at Rome, and stands between the Forum and the Colossenm ; and exhibits so accurately, at the present day, the image of this celebrated candlestick sculptured on one of the beautiful bassi rilievi which ornament the inner part of that splendid monument.

pattern which was shown to Moses in the Mount,\* that it immediately presents itself to our attention; nor will it escape the remembrance of any one, however partially conversant with the contents of the sacred volume, that a constant supply of the purest oil of olives was particularly enjoined, in order to keep a lamp always burning in the tabernacle.† Among the vessels which Solomon made for the 'house of the Lord, were the golden candlesticks, five on the right hand and five on the left.'‡

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\* *Exodus*, C. xxv. V. 31, &c. † *Ibid.* C. xxvii. V. 20.

‡ *3 Kings*. C. vii. V. 49.—The third book of Kings in the Catholic version, is called the first book of Kings in the Protestant Bible. The twofold use of lights, to manifest a civic respect, and exhibit a religious veneration, was conspicuous amongst the Jews. The employment of such a method to manifest a reverence towards things that were dedicated to the service of religion, is instanced by a circumstance which Josephus mentions in his *Antiquities*. (*Lib.* xviii. C. 6.) We gather from the pages of that Jewish historian, that whenever the stole, or mantle belonging to the high-priest, was deposited within the walls of a certain tower called Antonia, a lamp was kept daily burning there.

That they considered the burning of lights as an emblem of civic homage and a testimonial of public respect, may be gathered from an incident in the history of their nation mentioned by the author of the second book of *Machabees*, C. xxii. While recording the magnificent reception which Antiochus met with on his visit to Jeru-

## II.—ADOPTED BY THE APOSTLES.

But without referring to the ceremonial of the Jewish Temple, we have an authority for the employment of lights in the functions of religion, presented to us in the Apocalypse. In the first chapter of that mystic book, St. John particularly mentions the golden candlesticks which he beheld in his prophetic vision in the isle of Patmos. By commentators on the sacred Scripture, it is generally supposed that the Evangelist, in his book of the Apocalypse, adopted the imagery with which he represents his mystic revelations, from the ceremonial observed in his days by the Church, for offering up the Mass or Eucharistic sacrifice of the Lamb of God, Christ Jesus.

That the use of lights was adopted by the Church, especially at the celebration of the sacred mysteries, as early as the time of the apostles, may likewise, with much probability, be inferred from

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salem, he informs us that Jason, who had obtruded himself into the dignity of high-priest, and the whole city, awaited at the gates that prince's approach; and on his arrival there, 'came out with torch-lights and praises.' So conspicuous indeed was this Hebrew custom, that a Heathen poet particularly mentioned it. Persius, as he notices how the Jews celebrated the birth-day of King Herod, says:—

At cum

Herodis venere dies unctaque fenestra

Dispositæ pinguem nebulam vomuere lucernæ.

*Satyr v.*

that passage in their acts which records the preaching and the miracles of St. Paul at Troas :—‘ And on the first day of the week, when we were assembled to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, being to depart on the morrow, and he continued his speech until midnight. And there were a great number of lamps in the upper chamber, where we were assembled.’\* That the many lamps, so particularly noticed in this passage, were not suspended merely for the purpose of illuminating, during the night-time, this upper chamber, in which the faithful had assembled on the first day of the week, to break bread ; but also to increase the solemnity of that function, and betoken a spiritual joy, may be lawfully presumed from every thing we know about the manners of the ancient Jews, from whom the Church borrowed the use of lights, in celebrating her various religious rites and festivals.

III.—LIGHTS EMPLOYED FROM PRIMITIVE TIMES AT  
DIVINE SERVICE.

The custom of employing lights, in the earlier ages of the Church, during the celebration of the Eucharist and other religious offices, is authenticated by those venerable records of primitive dis-

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\* *Acts, C. xx. V. 7, 8.*

cipline, which are usually denominated the Apostolic canons.\*

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\* Of the authenticity of these canons, it may not be amiss to present the reader with the following observations. The canons of the Apostles comprehend a collection of regulations respecting the discipline observed by the primitive Church, and amount to the number of seventy-six, or eighty-five, according to the different methods followed in arranging them. The first fifty only, are admitted to possess any claims to authority. While it is universally allowed that these ordinances were not drawn up by the Apostles themselves, nor promulgated by them in their present form in which we now possess them—for antiquity is silent on this circumstance—their testimony is, however, generally admitted to be incontrovertible. Daillé and a few Protestants have, it is true, bestowed, but thrown away, much labour and some learning in endeavouring to prove that these canons are supposititious, and that they were not even known, much less cited, before the fourth century. Of a host of strenuous and successful advocates who have come forward in their vindication, should be particularly noticed Dr. Beveridge, a learned Protestant divine, bishop of St. Asaph, who in an able work entitled ‘*Codex canonum vindicatus*,’ published at the end of Cotelerius’s collection of Apostolic Fathers, (*Tom. ii. Antwerp, 1698*) and in a separate form, has clearly demonstrated that the regulations embodied in these canons, were either framed by the bishops who flourished, or were enacted in conformity to the traditions handed regularly down from the Apostles by the councils assembled during the first three centuries of the Christian era.

To pretend that these canons are supposititious, is an equivocation of which some amongst those who reject the

In several of these ordinances, a distinct mention is made of these offerings of oil which were intended for nourishing the lamps employed in the assemblies of the faithful; and the third of these canons expressly prohibits that any thing should be offered at the altar, during the holy oblation, excepting oil for the lights, and incense.\*

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doctrines of the Catholic Church, have most unlawfully endeavoured to avail themselves.

Though these canons be apocryphal, and by consequence not genuine—in as much as they were neither committed to writing by the Apostles themselves, nor penned by St. Clement, to whom some authors have attributed them—still, however, this does not prevent them from being true and authentic, since they embody the traditions descended from the Apostles and the Apostolic Fathers, and bear a faithful testimony that the discipline which prevailed during the first and second centuries, was established by the Apostles.

If these canons more immediately record the practices of discipline, they likewise lend their attestation to the dogmata insisted on, to the morality that was recommended, and to the outward worship so piously exercised, by the teachers of Christianity during the first two ages subsequent to its promulgation. It is, moreover, worthy of remark, that in revolving these venerable documents of religious antiquity, we continually meet with the terms of altar, and of sacrifice; we observe the various gradations in the hierarchy; and perceive that to the pastors of the Christian Church, were assigned all the attributes of a veritable order of priesthood.

\* Μὴ ἐξὸν δὲ ἔστω προσάγεσθαι τὸ ἕτερον εἰς τὸ θυσιαστήριον ἢ

Some amongst the Fathers of the Church, by the incidental notice they have taken of the use of lights in the sanctuary, have rendered an important attestation in favour both of the employment of them, and the antiquity of such a practice. St. Athanasius, who flourished about the year 326, complains so feelingly against the Arians, whose impiety was such, that they afforded access into the church to the heathens, who plundered the oil, and burned before their idols the very tapers that had been the offerings of the faithful.\*

St. Augustin who wrote about the year 390, in one of his discourses,† thus exhorts his auditors ; —‘ Let those who are able, present either wax-tapers, or oil which may supply the lamps.’

IV.—DEFENDED BY ST. JEROM AGAINST VIGILANTIUS, AND NOTICED BY ST. PAULINUS AND PRUDENTIUS.

It happens not unfrequently, that those very calumnies which have been propagated, and the attacks that were so furiously directed by the enemies of our holy faith, in ancient times, against certain practices of discipline then followed by the Church, are the most triumphant testimonials which

ἔλαιον εἰς τὴν λυχνίαν, καὶ θυμίαμα, τῷ καιρῷ τῆς ἁγίας ροσφορας.

\* Το ἀποκεμμενον ἔλαιον ἡρπαζον, καὶ τοὺς κηρῶνας τῆς ἐκκλησίας τοῖς εἰδωλοῖς ἀνιπτον.—Athan. *Epist. ad Orthodox. tom. i. p. 946.*

† *De Temp. Serm. 215.*

can be adduced, at the present day, both to establish the venerable origin of such observances, and to warrant a continuation of them. In the present instance, this remark is strikingly observable; for the strictures which Vigilantius passed, in the fourth age, on the use of lights in churches, as well as at the shrines of the martyrs, and the energetic refutation from St. Jerom of the charge of superstition preferred against such a pious usage, by that apostate, may be noticed as an irrefragable argument, in the nineteenth century, to establish the remote antiquity of this religious custom. After mentioning as a fact of public notoriety, and in a manner which defied contradiction, that the Christians at the time when he was actually writing, which was about the year 376, were accustomed to illuminate their churches during mid-day with a profusion of wax-tapers; Vigilantius proceeds to turn such a devotion into ridicule. But he met with a learned and victorious opponent, who, while he vindicated this practice of the Church against the objurgations of her enemy, took occasion to assign those reasons which induced her to adopt it. That holy and learned Father observes; — ‘ Throughout all the churches of the East, whenever the gospel is to be recited, they bring forth lights, though it be at noon-day; not certainly to drive away darkness, but to manifest some sign of joy, that under the type of corporal light, may be indicated that light of which we read in the psalms



—thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my paths.\* The information 'which was casually furnished by St. Jerom, concerning a practice so invariably observed throughout the Eastern portion of the Church, has been conveyed down to us in reference to the West, in some beautiful lines of St. Paulinus, the justly celebrated bishop of Nola in Campania Felix, and contemporary of the eloquent doctor of the Latin Church. It is thus the poet sings in his verses in honour of St. Felix :—

' Clara coronantur densis altaria lychnis ;  
Lumina ceratis adolentur odora papyris.  
Nocte dieque micant. Sic nox splendore diei  
Fulget, et ipsa dies cœlesti illustris honore,  
Plus micat innumeris lucem geminata lucernis.'

*Nat. III. S. Felicis, p. 54.*

With crowded lamps are these bright altars crown'd,  
And waxen tapers shedding perfume round  
From fragrant wicks, beam calm a scented ray  
To gladden night, and joy e'en radiant day.  
Meridian splendours thus light up the night,  
And day itself, illum'd with sacred light,  
Wears a new glory, borrow'd from those rays  
That stream from countless lamps in never ending blaze.

Prudentius, another Christian poet, furnishes in several places of his works, especially in his hymns,

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\* Per totas Orientis Ecclesias quando Evangelium legendum est, accenduntur luminaria, jam sole rutilante non utique ad fugandas tenebras, sed ad signum lætitiæ demonstrandum....ut sub typo luminis corporalis illa lux ostendatur, de qua in Psalterio legimus : *Lucerna pedibus meis verbum tuum, Domine, et lumen semitis meis.*—Hier. *Epist. advers. Vigilant.*

the clearest testimony concerning the use of lights throughout the Churches of Gaul, and Spain, and Italy, at the time he wrote, which was towards the decline of the fourth century. So far is he from regarding their introduction into the liturgy as an event of recent date, that he tacitly asserts the practice to have been derived from antiquity, by the notice which he takes of lights, while describing the assemblies of the early Christians in the times of persecution. In his hymn upon the martyrdom of the holy deacon St. Laurence, Prudentius introduces the persecuting pro-consul as describing the meetings of the Christians in the catacombs; and puts these with several other verses into the mouth of that Roman magistrate:—

‘ Argenteis scyphis ferunt  
Fumare sacrum sanguinem;  
Auroque nocturnis sacris  
Adstare fixos cereos.’

*Liber Peristephanon, Hymn. 11. v. 69.*

In silver chalices, 'tis said,  
Fuming the sacred blood is shed;  
And fixed on gold, the tapers' light  
Illumes their midnight solemn rite.

#### V.—PROVED FROM THE LITURGIES AND OTHER MONUMENTS.

That lights were anciently as now employed at the celebration of the sacred mysteries, and at other portions of the public service, may be collected, not only from the ritual constitutions of

the Church, but from a variety of incidental circumstances. In another part of this work, has already been adduced the form that was employed in the Church of Carthage\* for the ordination of acolytes. The person to be initiated into that last of the four minor orders, was admonished that one amongst his future offices would be, to take care of the lights in the church. St. Isidore testifies what was the function more particularly incumbent on acolytes in the Spanish Church, when, as he says, they are denominated in Latin Ceroferarii or taper-bearers, from their carrying wax-lights not only when the gospel is read, but whenever sacrifice is to be offered up.† Micrologus‡ asserted that, according to the Roman ordinal, Mass was never celebrated without lights, which were employed not to dispel darkness, since the service is performed during the broad day; but rather as a type of the light of him whose sacrament we

\* A. D. 398.

† 'Acolythy Græce, Latine ceroferarii dicuntur, a deportandis cereis quando Evangelium legendum est, aut sacrificium offerendum. Tunc enim accenduntur luminaria ab eis, et deportantur,' &c.—*Isidor. Orig. lib. vii. c. 12.*

‡ Such is the name assigned to an unknown author, who wrote (A. D. 1080) a very valuable book on celebrating Mass, to which he affixed the modest title of the '*Little Discourse*,' in Greek, *Micros Logos*.

there celebrate, and without whom we grope about at mid-day as though it were night.\*

The use of lights at Mass is not peculiar to the Latin Church, and without reproducing the testimony of St. Jerom† concerning the practice at his time of all the Churches in the East, we may refer at once to the Oriental liturgies themselves, and we shall observe that in all of them, there are rubrics which especially prescribe that wax-tapers should burn at the altar at which the holy sacrifice is offered. In the Syriac liturgies, it is directed that lights be arranged on the right hand, and on the left, previously to the approach of the priest to the altar;‡ and the commentators on the various liturgies in use amongst the other Churches in the East, have particularly noticed this ritual observance in all of them.§ A section of the

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\* ‘Juxta Ordinem Romanum nunquam Missam absque lumine celebramus: non utique ad depellendas tenebras, cum fit clara dies: sed potius in typum illius luminis, cujus sacramentum ibi conficimus, sine quo et in meridie palpabimus ut in nocte.’—*Microlog. de Eccles. observat. c. ii.*

† We have already cited his words at *p.* 575.

‡ ‘Igitur post primas illas breves orationes accenduntur cerei, a dextra parte primum, mox a sinistra. In Missali Chaldaico notatur, sacerdotem ubi cerei accensi sunt, vasa sacra collocare in altari, et mox oblatam et calicem disco imponere.’—*Renaudot, tom. ii. p. 53.*

§ ‘Accenduntur cerei; quorum sæpe mentio fit in pompis solennibusque processionibus Christianorum, quarum

Protestant denomination still preserves this ancient rite in its public service, for the Lutherans, like the Catholics, have wax-tapers burning at their celebration of the Lord's supper.\*

To this custom of employing lights at the divine service, must be referred many of those magnificent donations which the more wealthy of the faithful carried to the sanctuary even in the times of persecution, and which sometimes quickened the diligence, or rather sharpened the cupidity, of the magistrates to whom was entrusted the execution of those cruel edicts issued by the Cæsars for the extermination of the Christian name.† The presents of gold and silver lamps and candlesticks which pontiffs and princes

memoria est in Historia Alexandrina. Gabriel filius Tarich Patriarcha in constitutionibus ita definit :—Liturgia non celebretur absque cereis duobus majoribus aut minoribus, qui circa altare luceant—idem præcipiunt autor scientiæ Ecclesiasticæ, Abulbicat, omnesque liturgiarum expositores.—*Renaudot, tom. i. p. 196.*

\* Every one who has travelled through any part of Lutheran Germany is aware of this. A visit to the Lutheran chapel in St. James's palace, or to any of the other Lutheran chapels distributed through London, will satisfy the untravelled reader of this fact.

† This is partly testified by Prudentius in those verses we have just now given. In the proconsular acts are sometimes enumerated the lamps and candlesticks delivered up to the imperial authorities.

offered at the tomb of the Apostles and distributed at various times amongst the other churches at Rome, are frequently noticed by Anastasius Bibliothecarius,\* by whom we are informed that the piety of those times was not always satisfied with burning common wax and oil about the sanctuary, but that the most costly and odoriferous unguents were, on many occasions, provided.†

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\* *De vitis Romanorum Pontificum, passim.*

† The number and variety of the lamps and candlesticks anciently employed in churches, may be gathered from their denominations. In Anastasius and other old writers, we continually find mentioned Candelabrum, Cereostata, Pharus, Cantharus, Cicindela, Lucerna, and Lampades cum delphinis. Anastasius is particularly minute in his enumeration of the golden lamps and crosses which Constantine the Great bestowed upon the basilical churches at Rome; (*tom. i. p. 35*) and the names of the various estates in Africa, and the East, with which that pious emperor endowed those dedicated to St. Peter, and to St. Paul, have been preserved through the diligence of the same writer, who, in his account of that splendid temple erected on the Ostien way by Constantine, over the tomb of the Apostle of the Gentiles, tells us;—‘*Omnia enim vasa sacrata aurea, argentea, aut ænea ita posuit, sicut et in Basilicam Sancti Petri Apostoli, ita et Beati Pauli Apostoli ordinavit. Sed et crucem auream super locum Beati Pauli Apostoli posuit pensam libras centum et quinquaginta. Possessio Fronimusa præstans oleum nardinum libras septuaginta, aromata libr. quinquaginta. Cassia libr. centum. Sub civitate Ægypti possessio Cyrias*

## VI.—MYSTIC SIGNIFICATION OF LIGHTS AT MASS.

In the holy sacrifice of the Mass, the Christian has the most abundant cause imaginable for joy. The altar then becomes the throne of God made man, and angels and cherubim surround it in prostrate adoration. The Church, in her primitive days, to manifest her lively glowing faith and joyfulness, produced this emblem of lights. She still continues to retain their use. While these wax-tapers, therefore, proclaim our exultation for the actual presence of our blessed Redeemer, they typify the light and glory of the gospel diffused throughout the earth, by that Orient from on high, Christ Jesus. St. Jerom, as we have already seen, observed in his answer to *Vigilantius* ;—‘ Whenever the gospel

*præstans oleum nardinum libr. septuaginta, balsamum libr. triginta, aromata libr. septuaginta, storace libr. triginta, stacten lib. centum et quinquaginta. Possessio Basilea præstans, Aromata libr. quinquaginta oleum nardinum libr. sexaginta, balsamum libr. viginti, crocos libr. septuaginta.*

The brilliancy and fragrance which were often shed around a martyr's sepulchre at the celebration of his festival, by multitudes of tapers and lamps fed with aromatic oils, are noticed by St. Paulinus :—

*Ast alij pictis accendant lumina ceris,  
Multiforesque cavis lychnos laquearibus aptent,  
Ut vibrent tremulas funalia pendula flammæ.  
Martyris hi tumulum studeant perfundere nardo,  
Et medicata pio referant unguenta sepulchro.*

*Paulinus, Natalis Sextus.*

is to be read, lights are produced; not certainly to banish darkness, but to demonstrate a sign of joy; hence these evangelical virgins always have their lamps burning;\* and to the Apostle it is said, let your loins be girded, and candles in your hands;† and of St. John the Baptist it was remarked, he was a lamp burning and shining,‡ that under the type of corporal light, that light may be manifested of which we read in the psalmist;§—“Thy word, O Lord, is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my paths.”

#### VII.—LIGHTS AT BAPTISM.

Nor were lights confined to the sacrifice of the Mass; they were employed during other functions of religion.

Amongst the other ceremonies which were practised immediately after baptism had been administered, St. Gregory Nazianzen who flourished about the year 372, enumerates that of a lighted taper being carried by the Neophyte. ‘The lamps,’ he says, in his fortieth oration on the baptized, ‘the lamps which immediately after baptism thou shalt light, are emblems of those lamps of faith with which radiant souls shall hasten forth to meet the bridegroom.’

When personages of high distinction were baptized with public solemnity, the custom of bearing lights was observed with extraordinary magnificence. An instance is recorded in the splendid

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\* *Matt. C. xxv.* † *Luke, C. xii.* ‡ *John, C. v.* § *Ps. cxix.*



ceremonial which accompanied the administration of this sacrament to the younger Theodosius.— ‘ After the Emperor had been baptized and had issued from the church, another opportunity was afforded to behold the splendour and magnificent apparel of those who were invested with the public magistracy. Every one was robed with white, so that the whole assembly appeared covered as it were with snow. The patricians, illustrious personages, and the several dignitaries, with lines of military, preceded, bearing wax-tapers in their hands: so that the stars themselves might have been imagined to have appeared upon the earth.’\*

#### VIII.—SPIRITUAL MEANING OF THEM.

The employment of lights on this occasion was most appropriate. The glowing taper was a symbol so beautifully expressive of the actual illumination of the recently baptized person, beamed upon him by the Holy Spirit, and called to his remembrance that admonition of the Saviour;—‘ So let your light shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.’†

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\* See Baronius, Anno 401, *Vol. v.*

† Deinde cereus ardens in manum traditur, qui ostendit Fidem charitate inflammata, quam in baptismo accepit, bonorum operum studio alendam atque augendam esse.—*Consil. Trident. Catechismus de Baptismo, parte secund. num. 40.*

## IX.—LIGHTS USED AT FUNERALS.

An observance which was practised at the initiation of the faithful into the mysteries of religion, was sedulously employed when their mortal remains were consigned to the sepulchre.

Eusebius the historian has noticed, in a particular manner, the unusual number of lights placed upon golden candlesticks which produced such a powerful effect upon the crowd of spectators who came to view the funeral obsequies of Constantine the Great.\* St. Gregory Nazianzen,† in the description which he gives of the funeral honours rendered to his brother Cæsarius, in the oration which he pronounced upon him, mentions that their mother accompanied the corpse to the place of sepulture, and bore a lighted taper in her hand. Another St. Gregory, the highly gifted bishop of Nyssa, and younger brother to the great St. Basil, referring to the obsequies of his sister Macrina, mentions that a great concourse of people encircled the bier, and that a numerous body from amongst the clergy, drawn up in long array and holding lights in their hands, preceded it. St. Jerom informs us‡ that the body of St. Paula was carried by bishops to its place of interment. Some portion of the prelates supported the bier upon their shoulders,

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\* Euseb. *in vita Const.*

† Naz. *in Orat. x. in Cæsarium*, tom i. p. 169.

‡ In his 27th Epistle which is directed to Eustochius.

and the others went before with lighted tapers in their hands. Theodoret,\* recording the translation of the eloquent St. Chrysostom's body from Comana to Constantinople, remarks that such a multitude of people proceeded in ships and every kind of vessel to meet the precious relics, in their passage across the Bosphorus, that the very sea was radiant and twinkling with the lamps.†

The meaning of this custom is assigned to us by St. Chrysostom himself, who informs us that it was usual to carry lights before the dead, to signify that they were champions or conquerors, and as such, were borne in triumph to their graves.‡ This ancient custom is still kept up in Catholic countries. Every one who has travelled in any part of Italy, must have oftentimes observed, that not even the very poorest individual there, is ever

\* He was bishop of Cyprus, and continuator of the history of the Church from the epoch at which that of Eusebius leaves off, which was at the year 322, and brings his narration down to 428.

† By the 59th of the Justinian novels, a prohibition was issued to the acolytes of Constantinople, by which they were forbidden to exact a fee for their torches, since from the public fund which had been established in the imperial city for the interment of the dead, a certain stipend had been assigned to these ecclesiastics for their attendance at funerals.

‡ Ἐπὶ μοι, τι βουλονται αἱ λαμπάδες αἱ φαῖδραι; οὐχ ὡς ἀθλητὰς αὐτοὺς προπεμπομεν;—S. Chrys. *Hom. iv. in Epist. ad Heb.*

conveyed to the grave without some few attendants, who walk by the bier, with lighted torches in their hands, reciting a prayer for the soul of the departed. Lamps and torches were lighted in the day, to signify Christian joy, and to exhibit respect and honour to the departed, as to a victorious combatant, who had vanquished this world here below; and was now proceeding to take possession of a brighter and a better world above.\*

#### X.—ON THE PASCHAL CANDLE.

Who was the inventor of the Paschal candle, or from what epoch may be dated its earliest adoption by the Church, are incidents both of which are equally involved in historical obscurity.† That

\* *θυμιάμασι και κηρίοις αὐτοὺς συνοδευομεν, δεικνυντες ὅτι τοῦ σκοτειν οὐ βίου λυθεντες, πρὸς τὸ φῶς το αληθινον ἐπορεύθησαν.*—*S. Chrysostomus, Hom. cxvi.*

† In the ancient Roman sacramentaries, particularly in the missal of the Roman pontiff St. Gelasius, (A.D. 495) the solemn blessing for the paschal candle is inserted. Ennodius, the learned bishop of Pavia, in 519, has left us two forms of benediction, composed in no inelegant language; (*Ennodii Op. t. i. cura Sirmondi*) and the fourth council of Toledo, celebrated in 633, makes mention of the paschal candle and its benediction, at the same time assigning the mystic sense which the Spanish Church affixed to such a ceremony.—*Concil. Gen. apud Labbeum, tom. v. p. 1708.*

its origin is very ancient, may be unhesitatingly asserted, when we remember that St. Jerom and St. Augustin severally make mention of this usage: the first in his epistles, the latter in his book 'De Civitate Dei.'

That a candle was solemnly blessed upon the eve of Easter, and kept burning at divine service during Paschal time, or the period which elapses between the feasts of the Resurrection and Ascension, at Rome in the fifth century, is ascertained by a permission which Anastasius the librarian, in his *Liber Pontificalis*, informs us, was conceded by the pontiff Zosimus, who died in the year 418, in favour of the several parish-churches throughout Rome, by which they were authorized to bless the paschal candle, in imitation of a practice then observed in the basilicæ and more sumptuous temples of that metropolis of Christianity.\* If it be permitted to hazard a conjecture, the paschal candle may be supposed to have derived its origin from a custom which for a long time afterwards prevailed at Constantinople, and was introduced under the founder of that imperial capital, of illuminating the streets with a profusion of lights and tapers upon the eve of Easter, to anticipate the joy and shadow forth the glory of the resurrection.†

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\* Hic (Zosimus) fecit constitutionem per Parochias, concessa licentia cereos benedici.—*Anas. tom. i. p. 53.*

† *Antiquitatum Christianarum institutiones a Selvaggio, vol. iii. p. 63, in notis.*



*Representation of the Blessing of the Paschal Candle, from an Illuminated Manuscript of the Eleventh Century.*

#### XI.—THE EXULTET.

That beautiful canticle, the *Exultet*, which is chanted by the deacon on holy Saturday, while blessing the paschal candle, has been unanimously assigned by ecclesiastical tradition to the great St. Augustin;\* though, indeed, through the emen-

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\* St. Augustin himself thus refers to the hymn which he composed for the blessing of the paschal candle :—‘*In laude quadam cerei breviter versibus dixi.*’ In an old manuscript of the pontifical missal, used in the church of Pavia, which, as appears by the style of the character, must have been transcribed about the year 800, is the following observation on the *Exultet*:—‘*Usus benedicens cereum a B. Augustino repertum tradit ecclesia, qui benedictionem illius perficiens a S. Hieronymo repre-*

ditions and abridgements it has undergone, from St. Hugo and other holy prelates, that expressive composition, as we now possess it, somewhat varies from the original.

The paschal candle is of unusual dimensions, being generally many feet in height, and several inches in diameter. Towards the middle part of it are inserted five grains of incense,\* in the figure of a cross. On the Continent, particularly at Rome, in the basilicæ, and the patriarchal and the richer churches, the pedestal which upholds it is usually a column of some precious marble, and sometimes elaborately wrought with sculpture, or curiously tessellated in rich and elegant mosaic.† The deacon,

hensus est, cur Virgiliana verba inseruerit; sed sicut a B. Hieronymo emendata tunc fuit; ita nunc per ecclesias canitur.—*Apud Martene, de Antiquis Ecc. Ritibus, tom. iii. p. 155.*

\* These five grains of incense, as they are called, are represented by so many pieces of gilt wood, of a cubical form, and have a pin fixed in them, by which they are fastened to the candle.

† In many of the churches at Rome, the column which supports the paschal candle is composed of a shaft of *verde antico*, and of a Corinthian base and capital, elegantly wrought either in gilt bronze or white marble, and stands permanent and conspicuous in the sanctuary. The curiously storied column of St. Paul's, exhibiting the passion and resurrection in a series of bassi rilievi, may be seen in Ciampini, (*tom. i. p. 24, tab. xiv.*) who has also

not the celebrating priest, récites the benediction over it.\*

#### XII.—ITS MYSTIC SIGNIFICATION.

The two-fold mystic signification which the Church attaches to this ancient rite, is no less appropriate than beautiful and edifying. The paschal candle is regarded as an emblem of Christ. While it remains unlighted, it is figurative of his death and repose in the tomb ; when lighted, it represents the splendour and the glory of his resurrection. Before it is blessed, the officiating deacon inserts the five grains of incense, to signify that the sacred body of our divine Redeemer was bound in linen cloths with spices, and thus consigned to the grave, by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus.† The five incisions made to receive the grains of incense, which are so arranged as to form the figure of the cross, represent the five wounds

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given those of St. Clement's and of St. Laurence's.—*Ibid.* p. 22, 23, *tab.* xii. xiii.

\* From venerable Bede, (*Lib. de Ratione Temp.* C. lv.) we gather, that in his time it was the practice of the Church for the deacon, before commencing the benediction of the paschal candle, to inscribe, with a stylus or writing-needle, the date of indiction, and the occurring year upon it.

† *St. John*, C. xix. V. 38-40.



that were inflicted on the body of Christ at his crucifixion.

Though it be usually reserved to priests only, to pronounce benediction over any thing, an exception is made in the present instance, as it is the deacon, not the celebrant, who blesses the candle. This, however, is not destitute of a mystic meaning; for it signifies that the body of Christ was deposited in a sepulchre that had been prepared with a mixture of myrrh and aloes, 'as was the manner of the Jews to bury,'\*—not by his apostles, but by the disciples.†

The paschal candle is thought by some to have a second meaning. Before being lighted, it is considered to be a figure of the column of a cloud which moved before the Israelites by day; and lighted, it is thought to represent the column of fire that burned by night, to point out the land of promise.‡ This figurative meaning, though at

\* *St. John, C. xix.*

† Vide Benedictum XIV. *de Festis, D. N. J. C. de Sab-  
bato sancto, lib. I. c. viii. sect. 55.*

‡ Such is the symbolic meaning attributed to the Paschal candle in the Pavia missal, a copy of which, transcribed, as it would seem, in the year 800, contains the following annotation on the *Exultet*;—'Cereus quoque statuitur in loco ubi benedicendus est, in typo columnæ egredienti populo ex Ægypto ducatum præbentis.'—*Apud Martene, de Antiquis Ecc. Ritibus, tom. iii. p. 154.*

present forcible and appropriate, was still more obvious in the early ages of the Church, when it was usual for the baptismal font to be blessed, and public baptism to be administered on Easter eve, to a crowd of catechumens ; when the paschal candle, which had been recently blessed, was carried before them in the solemn procession which they made towards the waters of regeneration. It was then the catechumens were happily assimilated to the Israelites. Like them, these new believers had escaped an Egyptian bondage, and were about to pass through the Red Sea, in the waters of baptism, in order to arrive at the real promised land, a state of grace, which was indicated by that heavenly column, shining on them day and night, the gospel-light of Christ. The column which is generally employed in the churches of Italy, but especially in those of Rome, to support the paschal candle, has a reference to the second meaning of this ceremony.

In the service peculiar to Holy Saturday, or Easter eve, the attention will be arrested by the

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In the hymn itself, after a reference is made to the pillar which preceded the Israelites in their exit from Egypt to the land of promise, the candle is denominated a column. —‘*Sed jam columnæ hujus præconia novimus, quam in honorem Dei rutilans ignis accendit.*’ In some churches on the continent, the Paschal candle is made to weigh thirty-three pounds, in reference to the number of years our blessed Redeemer lived upon earth.

lighting of the triple candle, the branches of which all arise from one stem, which is affixed to the top of what is denominated the reed. This three-branched candle is intended to indicate a Trinity of persons in one God ; or the light and glory of the triune God beaming forth upon mankind through the person of our Redeemer Jesus.\*

The Purification, a festival common to the Latin and Greek Churches,† is rendered peculiar by the blessing of wax-tapers, which are carried burning by those who form the procession which takes

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\* In the Greek ritual, each time a bishop celebrates mass, he blesses the people in a peculiar manner, holding in each hand a curious wax-taper. One of them is a three-forked candle, denominated the *τρικημιον*, and is intended, like the similar one employed in the Latin Church on Holy Saturday, to symbolize the Triune God. The second, which is composed of two branches arising from one stalk, and called *δικοημιον*, is a symbol of Christ, who in his one person unites the two distinct natures of God and man.—*Goar, Euchologium Græcorum*, p. 125. We have given the figure of a Greek prelate blessing the people, with these lights, in a plate, at Chap. XII. Num. 36.

† This festival is very ancient, and is called, in the Greek calendar, *Υπαντη*, or ‘the meeting,’ because, as Micrologus observes, ‘Those venerable personages, Simeon and Anna, came forth to meet our divine Redeemer Jesus, when he was brought, by the blessed Virgin Mary, to be presented in the temple. One of St. John Chrysostom’s homilies, the 137th, is composed on this festival. St. Gelasius also notices its celebration in the Latin Church.

place afterwards. The symbolical meaning attributed to this ceremony, is, that the faithful should, with the holy Simeon, recognize in the infant Jesus, the salvation which the Lord had prepared before the face of all people,—‘A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of the people of Israel,’\*—and be admonished by the burning tapers which they are carrying in their hands, that their faith must be fed and augmented by the exercise of good works, through which they are to become a light to shine before men.†

The inquisitive or antiquarian reader may feel an interest in learning, that a custom which, at the feast of the Purification, and on some particular and solemn festivals, is still partially observed at Rome, of painting the candles,‡ derives its origin from venerable antiquity; since we find St. Paulinus referring to it in the hymn which we before noticed; and was composed by that prelate in honour of St. Felix. The poet says:—

Ast alii pictis accendant lumina ceris.

Nat. vi. *S. Felicis*, p. 562.

Let other some the *painted* tapers light.

Another curious practice, of which no remnant

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\* *St. Luke*, C. ii. V. 31, 32.    † *St. Matt.* C. v. V. 16.

‡ Perino del Vaga, one of Raphael's most efficient and successful scholars, commenced his profession in the workshop of an humble artist who earned his livelihood by painting candles for church-festivals.

that we know of is now discoverable, was observed amongst the ancient Christians. Not only were they accustomed to provide, when able, the richest oils, and the most odoriferous balsams,\* to feed the lamps which were suspended over the sepulchres of the martyrs, or illuminated the celebration of the holy sacrifice; but they had a method of mingling a perfume in the wax with which they made their tapers, and thus caused them to diffuse around a continual fragrance during the time they were kept burning. This is evident from passages both in Prudentius and St. Paulinus of Nola. The verses of that venerable bishop have just been recited, in which he makes such an elegant reference to this usage, when he says :—

*Clara coronantur densis altaria lychnis  
Lumina ceratis adolentur odora papyris, &c.*

With crowded lamps are these bright altars crown'd,  
And waxen tapers, shedding perfume round,  
From fragrant wicks, beam calm a scented ray, &c.

From what has hitherto been said, we gather, that from the earliest periods of the Church, the use of lights prevailed; that they were employed to shed splendour, and impart a dignity to the ceremonies of religion; as well as to create a solemnity of

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\* In a note at p. 580 was cited a passage from Anastasius, enumerating the various oils and aromatics produced by the estates in Africa and Asia belonging to the church of St. Paul at Rome.

thought, and inspire a reverence into the minds of the assistants.

Though on some, but not on all occasions, the employment of lights was indispensable, from either convenience or necessity, still however they had invariably attached to them a spiritual, a mystic signification. Lamps and glowing tapers, from their number and their brilliancy, were regarded as lively emblems of joy and exultation. Hence, to express these emotions, it was a custom of the Church to use lights at the celebration of the holy Eucharist; and at the public services; at the administration of baptism; and at the funeral obsequies of her spiritual children. But she particularly delighted to suspend them around the tombs of the martyrs and confessors, upon their festivals; or, to speak more accurately, upon the annual celebration of their nativity to the bliss of heaven, in order to exhibit a becoming honour to those amongst her sainted but departed children, and to stimulate her living sons and daughters to earn the glory and the happiness, by emulating the virtues and the heroism of their holy brethren.

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### CHAPTER XII.

#### ON THE VESTMENTS.

##### I.—ORIGIN OF THE VESTMENTS IN GENERAL.

FROM the concurrent testimony of writers who have bestowed much laborious research upon the investigation of this subject,\* it appears that, during the infancy of the Christian religion, the garments worn by her priesthood, when employed in offering up the holy Eucharistic sacrifice, were identically the same in form, and composed of similar materials with those corresponding articles of dress in the ordinary apparel adopted by persons of condition at that period. One distinction, however, was observed. The habits once employed in the celebration of the sacred mysteries, were for ever afterwards, exclusively appropriated to the same holy purpose; and it was regarded as highly indecorous, if not a profanation, to alienate them from the service of the altar, and to wear them in ordinary.

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\* Bona, *de Rebus Liturgicis*. Thomassinus, *Vetus et Nova Ecclesiæ Disciplina*.

In ancient as in modern days, fashion had her waywardness, though her changes were not so sudden, nor capricious as at present. But her innovations were not permitted to invade the precincts of the sanctuary; and the ecclesiastical habits retained their original though antiquated form, while the costume of civil society underwent a perfect but gradual transformation. In process of time, those garments which once were universally worn without regard to age, or station, or employment, by the more respectable members of society, became peculiar to the servants of the altar. This began to be discernible about the close of the sixth century.

From the moment that Constantine declared himself a Christian, the ceremonies of religion were performed with splendour, and regal magnificence shone throughout the sacred ritual. Before this period, the garments of the priesthood at the altar, though not always, were more frequently composed of the less expensive materials, and decorated merely with a scarlet stripe which was then denominated *Latus-clavus*. This was now exchanged for a vesture the same indeed in form, but manufactured of the richest stuffs.\*

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\* The sacred habit presented by Constantine to Macarius, the bishop of Jerusalem, to be employed by that prelate in administering the sacrament of baptism, was made from cloth of gold, as we gather from the testimony of Theodoretus (*Hist. lib. ii. c. 22*). In progress of time,

We are by no means warranted, however, to conclude, that, anterior to the reign of Constantine, the functions of religion had been wholly divested of magnificence :\* so far is this from being the fact, that on some occasions, the precious ornaments of the Church, aroused the cupidity of its persecutors.†

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we perceive that such was the splendour of some of the sacerdotal ornaments, that they were not only almost stiff with gold, but literally ponderous with the pearls and precious stones that studded them. (Cicognara, *Storia della Scultura*, tom. i. p. 224.)

\* The Evangelist St. John was accustomed to wear a plate of gold upon his forehead, and put on a linen tunic, as we gather from the testimony of the historian Eusebius (*lib. v. c. 24*) in his notice on a fragment of the letter of Polycrates, the bishop of Ephesus, to pope Victor. A similar golden ornament was worn by St. James the Apostle, and first bishop of Jerusalem, as Epiphanius, upon the authority of Clemens of Alexandria, informs us. (Epiph. *Hær. xxix. No. 2.*)

† The persecutor of St. Laurentius was not more eager to contaminate the faith of that holy deacon, than to possess himself of the gold and silver ornaments belonging to the altar, confided to his custody, as appears from those verses of Prudentius quoted at p. 576 of the last chapter, in which the poet represents the persecutor enumerating the golden vessels and candlesticks employed at Mass. St. Optatus Milevitanus, who flourished A. D. 370, not many years after Dioclesian's persecution, particularly notices the various gold and silver ornaments of the Church, which the bishop Mensurius could neither conceal

Religion suggests, and propriety insists, upon the appropriation of a distinctive habit to the priest and his attendants at the altar, while occupied in the public functions of their ministry. That amid the other members of the commonwealth its public functionaries should be distinguished by some appropriate costume is, and has, from times immemorial, been every where acknowledged. For in every government, whether it be a republic or a monarchy, to a soldier is assigned his uniform, whilst the civilian is recognizable by his peculiar habit. The chief of an army differs in his outward appearance from the common man, the judge when seated on the tribunal of justice, and the advocate while pleading at the bar before him, may be severally distinguished by these forensic robes of office. On state occasions in the senate, or when he approaches the presence of his sovereign in a formal manner, the nobleman is marked with some peculiar badge, which notifies his rank of Earl, or Baron, Duke, or Marquis. Similar motives of propriety have influenced the Church in ordering her ministers to array themselves in certain vestments while employed in the public celebration of her

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nor take away with him, to prevent them falling into the hands of the persecutors. ‘*Erant ecclesiæ ex auro et argento quam plurima ornamenta, quæ nec defodere terræ, nec secum portare poterat (Episcopus Mensurius).*’—*Opt. Milev. lib. i. adversus Parmen.*

holy rites, her sacraments and her liturgy. Even those sects who stand widest apart in doctrine and discipline from the Catholic Church, recognize, in fact, the propriety of her principles on this point, since their ministers not only assume a distinctive dress in society, but in general put on a gown, or surplice ; or may be distinguished by the colour at least of their garments, when employed in the midst of their respective congregations in the offices of the public ministry.

## II.—THEIR USE WARRANTED BY THE OLD LAW.

In the Old Law we find that the Almighty instructed Moses with minute precision relative to the sacred vestments :—‘ And thou shalt make a holy vesture for Aaron thy brother, for glory, and for beauty. And thou shalt speak to all the wise of heart, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron’s vestments, in which he, being consecrated, may minister to me ; and these shall be the vestments : they shall make a Rational, a Tunick, and a straight linen garment, a Mitre and a Girdle. They shall make the holy vestments for thy brother Aaron, and his sons, that they may do the office of priesthood unto me. And they shall take gold and violet, and purple, and scarlet twice dyed, and fine twisted linen embroidered with divers colours.\* And be-

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\* *Exod. C. xxviii. V. 2-6.*

neath at the feet of the same tunick round about, thou shalt make, as it were, pomegranates of violet and purple, and scarlet twice dyed, with little bells set between.\*

Describing the vision in which it was given him to see the rebuilding of the temple, the prophet Ezechiel says;—‘And when the priests shall have entered in, they shall not go out of the holy places into the outward court, but there they shall lay their vestments wherein they minister, for they are holy, and they shall put on other garments, and so shall they go forth unto the people.†

### III.—VINDICATED FROM THE STRICTURES PASSED UPON THEM BY MODERN PURITANISM.

The stern and melancholy religionist may morosely criticise the practice of arraying the minister who officiates in the Christian sanctuary with splendid garments of an ancient fashion. The self-opinionated sophist may congratulate himself that his spirit of devotion does not feel the want of such material auxiliaries to keep it animated; but the reasoning man—the pious and humble Christian—will acknowledge that the bulk of mankind is constituted not of philosophers, but of individuals who stand in need of something removed from the usages of ordinary life, before they will exhibit a becoming reverence for the functions of

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\* *Exod. C. xxviii. V. 33.*    † *Ezech. C. xlii. V. 14.*

religion ; and who require external aids to elevate and purify their thoughts, and to rivet their attention at the hour of prayer.\* Insensible, indeed, must be the soul of that man to all the holiest emotions of devotion ; and his heart must be benumbed with very apathy, who can assist at the more solemn celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice, and not experience how it lends a glow to fervour, and sublimes religious sentiments ; nor feel how beautifully appropriate to the Christian priesthood and the public service of the Christian temple, is the passage of the sacred writer, where he sketches for us such an animated picture of the Jewish sanctuary, when he describes the venerable son of Onias, the high priest, Simon ;—‘ Who shone as an olive-tree budding forth, and a cypress-tree rearing itself on high, when he put on the robe of glory, and was clothed with the perfection of power. When he went up to the holy altar, he

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\* Cum (Augustin, *lib. li. de Lib. Arbitr. c. 10.* ‘Humana autem anima,’ &c.) natura hominum ea sit, ut non facile queat sine adminiculis exterioribus ad rerum divinarum meditationem sustolli, propterea pia mater Ecclesia ritus quosdam instituit. Cæremonias item adhibuit, ut mysticas benedictiones, lumina, thymiamata, vestes, aliaque id genus multa ex Apostolica disciplina et traditione, quo et majestas tanti sacrificii commendaretur, et mentes fidelium per hæc visibilia religionis et pietatis signa, ad rerum altissimarum, quæ in hoc sacrificio latent, contemplationem excitarentur.—*Sessio xxii. c. 5, Concilii Trident.*

honoured the vesture of holiness; and when he took the portion out of the hands of the priests, he himself stood by the altar, and about him was the ring of his brethren; and as the cedar planted on mount Libanus, and as branches of palm-trees they stood round about him, and all the sons of Aaron in their glory....He stretched forth his hand to make a libation, and offered of the blood of the grape. He poured out, at the foot of the altar, a divine odour, to the Most High Prince.....And all the people together made haste, and fell down to the earth upon their faces, to adore the Lord their God.....And the singers lifted up their voices, and in the great house the sound of sweet melody was increased. Then he lifted up his hands over all the congregation of the children of Israel, to give glory to God with his lips, and to glory in his name.\*

IV.—PROPRIETY SUGGESTED THEIR ADOPTION  
BY THE GENTILES.

What was inspired to the Israelites by the spirit of God, decorum suggested to both idolater and Gentile. The Pagan priesthood was scrupulously

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\* *Ecclesiasticus*, C. l. *passim*. The Protestant Bible enumerates this book amongst the Apocrypha. That it is, however, the genuine and divinely inspired word of God, is demonstrated by the same authority upon which Protestants believe in the inspiration of those books which they place in their Canon of Scripture, namely, the tradi-



solicitous to assume a particular kind of garment, when occupied in performing the rites of their superstitious worship, or in sacrificing to their imaginary deities. This is equally attested by the poets and historians of antiquity, as well as by the statues, the paintings, and the medals, which have descended to us from that period, and are faithfully illustrative of the customs of Greeks, Romans, and barbarians.

V.—MOTIVES OF THE CHURCH FOR USING THEM.

The instruction which the Church delivers to her pastors, is as beautiful as it is eloquent. In exchanging his ordinary garments for the habit of the sanctuary, she admonishes the priest to express his desire before God of being invested with all these graces requisite for the due performance of his awful ministry. For she assures him that the sacerdotal vestments, as pope Innocent III has remarked,\* signify those virtues with which the priest of God should be decorated, according to the pious prayer of the psalmist:—‘ Let thy priest put on justice, and let thy saints exult.’ Nor, in these instructions, does she forget the people. She tells them to behold, in the varied ornaments

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tion and authority of the Catholic Church. For a vindication of the Catholic Canon of Scripture, see Appendix III. at the end of this work.

\* *Myster. Missæ L. C. x.*

in which their pastors, while officiating at the altar, are arrayed, a lively emblem of those several virtues which should adorn each Christian.\*

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\* From the writings of the Fathers, and in those monuments of primitive Christianity which remain, we observe, that from the earliest periods of the Church, the faithful were accustomed to affix a symbolical and spiritual meaning to almost everything employed in the service of religion. Orpheus was painted in the chapels in the catacombs, as an emblem of Christ, who, by the melodious sounds of the Gospel, was to tame the human passions, and draw around him men from every nation. The figure of a fish, or of a dove, upon the tombs of the primitive Christians, is a favourite symbol. Both mystically indicate Christ. The fish, for one amongst other reasons, because its name in Greek—*Ιχθυς*—is composed of the initials of *Ιησους Χριστος Θεου Υιος Σωτηρ*.—‘Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour;’ the dove, because Christ was innocence itself, as we have already noticed more at length in Chap. IX. Num. 4, and Chap. VII. Num. 17. Not only the form in which churches were erected, but their several ornaments, and even the colour of the materials, and of the columns about the altar, were determined and selected on account of some emblematic meaning assigned to them. The works which go under the name of St. Dionysius the Areopagite, but which were certainly written in the fifth century, especially the book on the Celestial Hierarchy, and the treatises on Mystic Theology, afford an interpretation to these symbols. The sacraments themselves were signs or symbols. We cannot therefore be surprised, that although the vestments were, in their original form, nothing more than the common dress of

VI.—THEY CHARACTERIZE THE ANTIQUITY OF  
THE CHURCH.

The peculiarities of style in building, will help to fix the era in which an edifice was erected ; the form of character, together with the material on which it is written, will materially assist the antiquary in detecting the date of the inscription ;—the costume of a statue, or the accessories of a picture, will serve to ascertain the period when the individual represented flourished, as well as to announce his rank, or particular condition. So it is with the Catholic Church ; view her under the semblance of a vast and spiritual edifice, the scriptural order of her hierarchy declares that her architect was Christ, whilst his apostles were the builders ; the same ancient languages,\* which are, and ever have been, used within her almost boundless limits, by men of every age, of divers speech,

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Greece and Rome, at the birth of Christianity ; the Church very soon assigned to them appropriate mystic significations. That she does so now, and has done for many centuries, is attested by the very prayers which she directs her ministers to recite when they array themselves in these sacerdotal garments.

\* From the days of the apostles, the Liturgy of the Mass has been celebrated in Greek, and in Latin, in Syriac and in Coptic. Since the fourth century it has also been solemnized in Ethiopic and Armenian. For the Use of Latin at Mass, see Chap. II.

from every nation of the earth, in administering the sacraments, and while offering up the Eucharistic sacrifice, proclaim what tongues were common to the world at the period of her birth, and have ever been familiar to her upwards from her infancy ; while the antiquated fashion of those garments which her ministers put on, when officiating at the altar, not only speaks to us of centuries and centuries gone by, and can alone furnish us with any remnants of the dress of republican or imperial Rome, but announces to us her jealousy, not only of guarding the deposit of faith, but of retaining the use of things in themselves indifferent. From passing these preliminary remarks upon the justness of appropriating a distinctive habit to the Christian priesthood, in which its members may offer up the sacrifice of the new law,—that clean oblation spoken of by Malachias,—we will now proceed to notice separately each article which composes this sacerdotal dress.

VII.—WASHING OF HANDS. VIII.—FIGURATIVE  
MEANING.

Before he robes himself in the sacerdotal vestments, the priest, clad in his cassock, washes the tips of his fingers. It has been invariably the custom, at all times, and in every nation, for the ministers of the altar to wash their hands pre-



Ch. de Châtillon. del.

H. More. sculp.

*The Priest in his Cassock washing his hands before vesting.  
The form of the surplice worn in England before the change  
of Belgium may be seen in the figure of the Acolyte.  
London: Printed for Joseph Storer, 1840.*



viously to their offering up sacrifice. The old law expressly commanded this observance.\*

VIII.—Though respect alone for the decorum of religion would inspire such a practice, still, however, the Church attaches a spiritual signification to it; and studies to convey to her ministers, by the symbol of exterior ablution, instructions to cleanse the heart by an interior purity, which she teaches them to solicit in a prayer particularly adapted to the purpose:—‘Grant,’ exclaims the priest, while washing his fingers, ‘Grant to my hands, O Lord, a virtue that shall cleanse away every stain, so that I may be able to serve Thee without impurity of body and of soul.’

#### IX.—THE CASSOCK.

The cassock is common to every order of the clergy, only varying in colour according to the dignity of the wearer. Priests wear black; prelates and bishops, purple; cardinals, scarlet; and the pope, white. Over the cassock is placed the amice.

#### X.—THE AMICE. XI.—ITS FORM. XII.—FIGURATIVE MEANING. XIII.—WHY SO CALLED.

The Amice is a piece of fine linen, in the form of an oblong square. The priest rests it for a moment, like a veil, upon the crown of his head;

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\* *Exod. C. xxx. V. 18-20.*

and spreading it upon his shoulders, recites the following prayer :—‘ Place upon my head, O Lord, the helmet of salvation, that I may be enabled to repel all the fiery darts of the wicked one,’—remembering the exhortation of the apostle :—‘ Put you on the armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil, and take unto you the helmet of salvation.’\* It is not without a mystic signification. The act of resting it for a moment on the head, as well as the prayer, which the priest is directed to pronounce on assuming it, render it strikingly allusive to that helmet of salvation with which each Christian warrior should arm himself, to extinguish and repel the fiery darts of the wicked one.

xI.—Formerly, the amice was worn upon the head in the manner of a hood, while vesting, and until the priest arrived before the altar, when it was lowered, and thrown back upon the shoulders, a custom which is still retained by the Capuchin and Dominican friars, as well as in some particular churches on the Continent.

xII.—By some ecclesiastical writers, the amice has been likened, and not without reason, to the ephod† of the Jewish priesthood ; others have as-

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\* *Ephes. C. vi. V. 11, 17.*

† Hinc humerale, quod intellige Ephod, apud nos Amictus dicitur, sibi imponit, et illo caput, et collum et humeros, unde et humerale dicitur, cooperit.—Honorius (A. D. 1130) in *Gemma Animæ, lib. i. C. 201.*



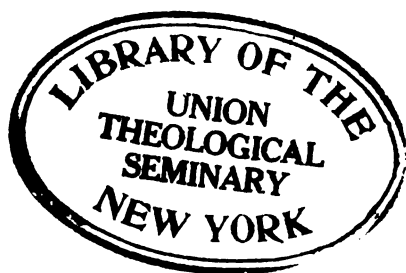


Ch. de Chabillon del.

H. Moore sculp.

*The Priest putting on the Amice*

London: Printed for Joseph Barker at No. 15, 1833.



simulated it to the sackcloth of penance which the prophets of the Old Testament so often recommended to the people. The corresponding garment, in the Coptic liturgy of St. Basil, is called *Epomis*, which is enumerated by Gabriel, patriarch of Alexandria,\* and by other ecclesiastical writers of the Eastern Churches,† amongst the sacerdotal vestments.

XIII.—The term ‘*amice*’ is derived from the Latin verb, *amicire*, to cover; being introduced in the eighth century, to cover the neck, which until that period was usually bare.

#### XIV.—THE ALB: ITS FORM AND COLOUR.

To the *amice* succeeds the *Alb*, which is an ample linen tunic, and so called from the Latin word *alba*, (white). Long garments were usually worn not merely in the states of ancient Greece, and by the separate nations of the East, but throughout the empire of Rome; and were not peculiar to any certain class of Roman citizens. Some, however, were plain, and made of common stuff, as they were employed for ordinary use; others were more costly, and appropriated to days of religious cere-

\* In *Rituali*.

† *Epomis sive amiculum instar Aaronis sacerdotis quem Deus in tabernaculo legali superhumerali amictum esse jussit. Abusebah, in Tract. de Scien. Ecc. apud Renaudot, tom. i. p. 178.*

mony, and to state occasions. The priests and levites, under the Mosaic dispensation, were undistinguished in ordinary life from the rest of society, by any particular garments. They assumed, however, a different and official vesture to distinguish them while discharging the functions of their sacred ministry. This, no doubt, the Church of Christ, along with several other things, borrowed from the synagogue.\* The Church has now consecrated the alb, or linen tunic, to the use of her priests, her deacons, and her sub-deacons, who are ministering at the altar.

The lower part of the alb was anciently ornamented with one or several stripes of scarlet attached to it. The number of these stripes affixed peculiar appellations to the tunic. If it had but one, it was denominated ‘Albæ Monolores,’ or an alb bordered with one stripe: if it had two, ‘Dilores,’—if three, ‘Trilores,’ &c.† From the authority of Anastasius the librarian, in his life of Benedict III, it would appear, that formerly the alb was sometimes fringed with gold, and made of silk; as he informs us, that the king of the Saxons presented to the church of St. Peter at Rome, amongst other magnificent donations, certain albs

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\* Thomasinus, *de Nova et Veteri Ecclesie Disciplina*. Vol. i. p. 367.

† Vopiscus, in *Aureliano, Script. Hist. August. t. ii.*

of this description.\* A remnant of the scarlet border is still preserved by some of the religious orders, who trim the bottom, and the sleeve-cuffs of the alb with lace, under which they attach scarlet silk.† In the middle ages, the custom of contracting the alb, by plaiting it in long folds, was introduced, and is still observed.

This long linen garment, which is called alb in the Latin or Western Church, is also used amongst the Oriental Christians, by priests, deacons, and sub-deacons, in the celebration of mass. By the Greeks it is denominated *χιτωνιον*; ‡ by the Syrians, ‘Koutivo;’ § and by the Arabs, ‘Tunia,’ || and is always white. Amongst the seven sacerdotal vestments used in the Coptic liturgy of St. Basil, it is particularly enumerated by Abusebah, who observes, that the alb appropriated to the use of the bishop should be edged with a rich border. ¶ The perfect resemblance of the Greek to the Latin alb may be observed by a view of those plates which

\* Anastasius, *Bibliothecarius*, tom. i. p. 338.

† Pelliccia, vol. i. p. 226.

‡ Renaudot, tom. i. p. 178.      || *Ibid*, tom. ii. p. 54.

§ *Ibid*.

¶ Camisia sive Alba quæ, si fuerit episcopus, limbo ad summum pretioso prætextetur; secus, eo carebit. Abusebah in *Tract. de Scient. Eccles. apud* Renaudot. tom. i. p. 178.

we have given in this chapter, in illustration of the Greek vestments.\*

XV.—FIGURATIVE MEANING.

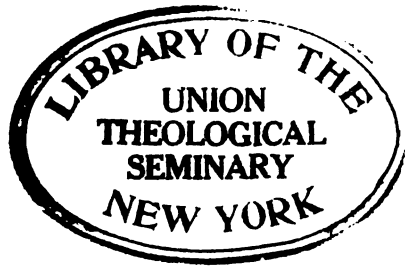
This long and snow-white garment which envelops the whole person of the wearer, is beautifully emblematic of that stainless candour and purity of soul which should shine, in a conspicuous manner, in all those who officiate around the altar, where the Lamb without spot is immolated. The priest, therefore, very appropriately says the following prayer in putting on the alb;—‘Cleanse me, O Lord, and purify my soul, that sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb, it may be fitted for eternal felicity;’—where the blessed are for ever clothed in robes of white, standing before the throne of God, and serving him day and night in his temple.†

The priest now confines the alb with the girdle.

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\* The fourth Council of Carthage (398) decreed that the deacon should use the Alb, only during the oblation, or the lecture. ‘Ut diaconus tempore oblationis tantum vel lectionis Alba utatur.’ *Can.xli. Concil. Gen. apud Labbeum, tom. ii. p. 120.* This long white linen tunic may be observed as one of the vestments with which bishops, priests, and other ministers of the altar are arrayed, in the Mosaics of the old churches at Rome, and in the illuminations of MSS. and other monuments of ecclesiastical antiquity we have in our libraries and venerable cathedrals.

† *Apoc. C. vii.*





*Ch. de Châtillon. 1875.*

*H. Meyer. 1875.*

*The priest is shown in the position of the body.*

*London, Printed and Sold by J. B. G. 1875.*



## XVI.—THE GIRDLE. XVII.—ITS ANCIENT FORM.

XVII.—It is in more modern times only that the girdle has been generally made like a cord ; anciently it was flat and broad ; and whilst it wore the appearance, was indiscriminately denominated by the terms of belt and zone, as well as girdle. It was not always white, but varied in its colours, and not unfrequently was woven of gold, and richly decorated with embroidery, and studded with precious stones, as may be gathered from various authorities.\*

## XVIII.—MENTIONED IN SCRIPTURE.

In several parts of the holy Scripture, mention is made of the girdle. The prophet Isaias, speaking of the Messiah, pronounces of him ;—‘ Justice shall be the girdle of his loins, and faith the girdle of his reins.’† Christ, while preaching to his disciples,

\* The bishop Riculphus bequeathed to his see, five zones, four of which were ornamented with gold, and embossed with jewels ; the remaining one was simply of gold. (Georgius, *de Lit. Romani Pontificis*, tom. i. p. 142.) Among other legacies which Talco Vigilensis made to the church of St. Margaret, was a zone of crimson silk (Ughel. t. vii. p. 1275). The antiquity of this article among the sacerdotal vestments, is evident by the devotion with which the people emulously strove to kiss the girdle of the Roman pontiff St. Gregory the Great, according to John the Deacon, who wrote his life.

† C. xi. V. 5.

thus exhorted them;—‘Let your loins be girt, and lamps be burning in your hands.’\* St. Paul in admonishing the Ephesians to take unto themselves the armour of God, instructs them to ‘stand, having your loins girt about with truth.’†

#### XIX.—FIGURATIVE MEANING.

The girdle, therefore, is very appropriately made a portion of the ceremonial attire belonging to the sanctuary, and is eloquently emblematical of that chastity and unsullied purity, with which both priest and people should anxiously endeavour to array themselves, before they dare to pass the threshold of a temple sacred to the Lord of spotless holiness;‡—‘Gird,’ says the minister as he

\* *St. Luke, C. xii. V. 35.*

† *Ephes. C. vi. V. 14.*

‡ From the girdle used by the pope at the celebration of Mass, hangs, on the left side, an ornament called the Succinctorium, which somewhat resembles a small manipule (Georgius, *de Liturgia Rom. Pontificis*, tom. i. p. 146). This vestment, peculiar amongst us to the sovereign pontiff, corresponds to a similar appendage appropriated to bishops and dignified ecclesiastics of the Greek rite, and denominated *επιγονάριον*. Balsamon (A. D. 1180) observes that the epigonation is considered by the Greek Church to typify the napkin with which our blessed Redeemer girded himself at the last supper, when he washed the feet of his disciples. At present it is ornamented with the cross, or more usually bears the head of our Saviour either painted

binds it on, 'gird my reins, O Lord, with the girdle of purity; extinguish in my heart the fire of concupiscence; and may the flames of thy holy love consume every earthly affection, every thing therein that is unworthy of thee.'

The zone or girdle with which the priest girds himself round the waist, over the alb, is noticed in all the Greek and Oriental liturgies.\*

Having finished the above prayer, the priest affixes, just above the wrist of his left arm, an ornament which is called the Maniple.

XX.—THE MANIPLE. XXI.—ITS ANCIENT FORM AND USE. XXII.—HOW GRADUALLY CHANGED.

XXI.—Originally the maniple was a narrow strip of linen, suspended from the left arm to cleanse away the perspiration from the face and brow, occasioned by the heat of the weather, or the fatigue and labours of the ministry; and it supplied the place, and was used for all the purposes, of the modern pocket-handkerchief.

XXII.—Gradually, however, it received embellishments: first of all it was bordered by a fringe; then decorated with needle work; till at length, it became

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or wrought in embroidery upon it, (Goar, *Euchologium Græcorum*, p. 111) as may be observed by inspecting our plates of the Greek prelates.

\* Goar, *ad Euchol. Græc.* p. 111. Renaudot, *tom. i. p. 55, tom. ii. p. 178.*

too precious to be employed for its original purpose. But although it ceased to be used as a handkerchief, it was retained for an ornament to which could be appropriately attached a spiritual meaning. A little later, from being made of linen, it began to resemble in colour, and to be composed of the same splendid materials of which the chasuble was formed,\* and we find that, about the eighth century, it was enumerated among the sacerdotal vestments.†

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\* It even came to be esteemed a badge of honour and distinction about the sixth century, when John, archbishop of Ravenna, referred the urgent solicitations of his minor clergy to Pope St. Gregory the Great, in order to obtain his permission to wear, in imitation of the clergy at Rome, the maniple while waiting on their archbishop. The Roman pontiff yielded to this prayer, but restricted his favour to the first deacons only of the church at Ravenna. (*Epist. liv. Greg. ad Joan. Episc. Ravennatum, lib. ii.*) During the ninth century, it was an ornament common both to priests and deacons without distinction, (*Pelliccia, vol. i. p. 229*) and after the eleventh century, its use was extended to sub-deacons, (*Ibid.*) to whom it was now delivered at the time of their ordination, as the insignia of their order and their ministerial office (*Cæremoniale Episc.*) It would appear from the illuminations of ancient MSS. and Missals, that formerly it was of the same breadth, and was not widened, as now, at its extremities.

† Bona, *Rerum Liturgicarum*, Vol. ii. p. 226, Num. 5.

## XXIII.—ITS FIGURE AND SIGNIFICATION.

Its ancient service is not, by any means, forgotten amid the ornaments which decorate it: but in the accompanying prayer is happily alluded to, in order to afford a useful, no less than a pious and consoling admonition to the priest, that he should bear the evils of this life, and endure the toils and anxious labours of his ministry, with the anticipation of a certain and eternal recompense. It is on this account, that the Church directs her ministers to recite the following prayer as they assume this ornament;—‘O Lord, may I be found worthy to bear the maniple of sorrow and affliction, that I may reap with joy the reward of my labours.’ In the Greek Church the maniple is termed *επιμινικια*.\* The Greeks as well as Maronites wear two maniples; one on each arm.† Amongst the Greeks, the Epiminicion is almost always ornamented like the Epigonation with the head of our Saviour, which the prelate holds out to such as approach him, to be kissed by them. The introduction of this custom was owing to the zeal of the Greek Church to propagate amongst the people a due respect for holy images.‡

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\* Goar, *in notis ad Liturgiam Sancti Joannis Chrysostomi*, Num. xii. p. 111.

† Hiero-Lexicon *Macri*.

‡ Goar, *in notis ad Liturgiam Sancti Joannis Chrysos.* Num. xii. p. 111.

XXIV.—THE STOLE. XXV.—ITS ANCIENT NAME.  
XXVI.—FORM. XXVII.—USE. XXVIII.—HOW ORNAMENTED FORMERLY.

XXV.—The stole was, during the first eight centuries, almost invariably called the ‘Orarium,’ from the use to which it was applied of wiping the face, according to the Latin ‘*ora*’ (face).

XXVI.—It was an oblong piece of fine linen spread about the shoulders, not unlike in shape, and worn in a fashion similar to that of the modern female scarf, and resembled the veil which, in solemn high masses, is worn by the sub-deacon while holding the patena; or by the priest whenever he gives benediction with the blessed sacrament.

XXVII.—At an early period of the Church, it was employed to serve in place of a handkerchief,\* especially by those whose office obliged them to speak or minister much in public; and preceded the maniple for such a purpose.

XXVIII.—By degrees the stole received a variety of ornaments: it was bordered with a stripe of purple round its hem; some embroidery was added to it; and at last it became so covered with these gradual embellishments as to render it too splendid, and much too costly, not to say unfit,

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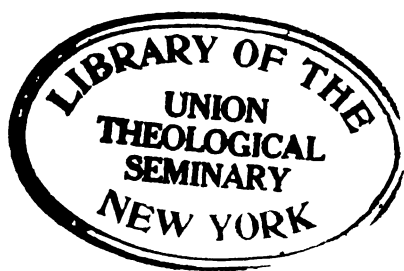
\* Profane writers have used the word ‘*orarium*’ under the same signification. Vopiscus, in his life of Aurelianus, mentions that the emperor distributed handkerchiefs to the populace of Rome, and says;—‘*Oraria dedit populo Romano, quibus uteretur populus ad favorem.*’



Chas. Chastillon inv.

J. H. M. S. S. S.

The Priest with the Missal on his left arm  
arranging the stole in the form of a cross upon his breast  
London: Printed for Joseph Storer 1788





to answer its original design. It was then that a narrow piece of linen, called the maniple, from its being fastened to the wrist, was substituted in the place of the orarium. The maniple, however, in its turn, as we have before observed, became transformed in precisely the same manner, into a mere ornamental portion of the priestly habit.

XXIX.—WHAT THE CLASSIC GREEK STOLE WAS.

The word 'stole' is Greek—στολή—and was employed by profane writers to signify generally every kind of cloak or upper garment, whether worn by man or woman; but, like its English synonyme, was more usually employed to designate a female habit. As the linen scarf, worn around the neck to serve the purport of a handkerchief, was likewise spread, in time of prayer, over the shoulders, and fell around the body like a female's mantle, it afterwards changed the denomination of orarium,\* for stole, and is now known by this latter term.

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\* By some, the word 'orarium' is derived from the Latin '*orare*,' to pray—as it is a robe which the primitive Christians invariably wore during the time of public prayer; and with which the female portion could veil their heads according to the admonition of St. Paul (1 *Cor. C. xi. V. 5*). The paintings of the catacombs, and the ancient mosaics of the churches of Rome favour the supposition.



*A female at prayer, veiled with the stola or orarium. This figure is painted on the wall of the fourth chamber in the cemetery of Callistus, on the Appian way. See Bottari, Roma Sotterranea, tom. ii. tav. lxxii.*

That the modern stole differs so much from the ancient orarium, will cease to awaken our surprise, when we compare the abridgements which have successively taken place in this garment, with those curtailments which have been similarly practised upon articles of a more recent period. The cuirass, which once encompassed the whole breast of the warrior, is now reduced to the almost insignificant

gorget; and such have been the diminutions of those pieces of armour, which protected the shoulders, that they have dwindled into the modern epaulet, which from being a defensive article of dress, manufactured of steel or iron, and considered by every soldier as a necessary defensive part of his accoutrements, has been transformed into an ornament of the lightest and most fragile texture, and is employed to designate the rank of the military or naval officer.

XXX.—WHAT THE EDGINGS OF LACE ON THE STOLE  
WERE ORIGINALLY.

It was a custom which universally prevailed amongst the ancient Romans, to ornament every kind of garment with stripes of cloth, and fringes of a purple colour.\* The stripes were called ‘Latus-clavus,’ if broad,—and ‘Angustus-clavus,’ if narrow. The breadth of this ornament was commensurate with the rank and dignity of the wearer. The Orarium, therefore, had its purple fringe and border. When contracted in its dimensions, those ornaments were retained as marks of honour; while the plain linen portions were cut away in such a manner, that we have the modern Stole in the form of a band, or collar, which surrounds the neck, and falls down below the knees on both sides of the body.—

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\* Rubenius, *de Re Vestiaria*.



*A figure from the fresco-paintings of the Catacombs, clad in a tunic which is ornamented with those stripes of purple cloth, called 'Clavi.' See Aringhi, Roma Subterranea, t. ii. p. 104.*

Before the use of the tunic called 'Colobium,' and the later privilege of wearing the Dalmatic, were accorded to the deacons in general, the Stole was the insignia of their order.\* This may be

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\* Formerly the deacon wore his stole, or as it was anciently called 'Orarium,' floating down and suspended from his left shoulder.



*A Bishop in the act of blessing, attended by a Deacon who wears the Stole hanging from the left shoulder. These figures are taken from an ancient Pontifical of the IXth century, see D'Agincourt, pl. 37.*

evidenced, amongst other proofs, by the ancient mosaic which adorns the tribune of the church of

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This ancient rite is noticed, and the reason for it is assigned by the IV. Council of Toledo (A. D. 633). *Unum igitur Orarium oportet Levitam gestare in sinistro humero, propter quod orat, ed est, prædicat. Concil. Gen. apud Labbeum, tom. v. p. 1716.* The use of the orarium or stole was by the Council of Laodicea (A. D. 364) prohibited to lectors and subdeacons; and exclusively reserved for deacons and for priests. *Concil. Gen. tom. i. p. 1511.* Though to the deacons who ministered around the person of the Roman pontiff, and to such as were attached to some privileged church, the use of the Dalmatic was granted, yet it appears that it was not until several centuries had elapsed, that this latter vestment was generally employed. This we may collect from various ecclesiastical pictorial monuments which exemplify the manner in which the deacon anciently wore the Orarium upon the left shoulder, at the same time that they exhibit proofs of the more recent introduction of the Dalmatic into universal use. In the pontifical which is now in the Minerva Library at Rome, and once belonged to Landolfe, Bishop of Capua, in the ninth century, there are several illuminations illustrative of the ceremonies of the ordinations. The figure of the deacon in these paintings, is always represented in an ample and ornamented Alb, with the orarium or stole descending from the left shoulder. (See D'Agincourt, *Histoire de l'Art, tom. iv. pl. xxxvii.*) Towards the commencement, however, of the tenth century, the Dalmatic seems to have been every where adopted as the officiating vestment of the deacon. (See the woodcut at Num. XLVI. of this chapter).

St. Laurence, in Rome. In it, that martyred Levite, and St. Stephen, are represented with stripes of linen attached to, and flowing from their left shoulders, a custom to which St. John Chrysostom so happily alludes, when he mentions that the deacons, while ministering in their holy office, during the tremendous sacrifice of the mass, appear to move and glide about like angels with their wings expanded.\* When the stole became peculiar to the ministers of the altar, it ceased to be made of linen, but was composed of the same materials as the chasuble or upper garment. As in the Latin, so in the Greek and Oriental Churches, the stole is a very conspicuous ornament amongst the vestments peculiar to the higher ministers of the altar.

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\* Ἐπίστατε τὴν πνευματικὴν εὐφροσύνην οἱ ταύτης γενησάμενοι, καὶ μεμνημένοι τῶν φρικτῶν μυστηρίων, καὶ τῶν λειτουργιῶν τῆς θείας λειτουργίας, τῶν μμουμένων τὰς τῶν ἀγγέλων πτερυγας, ταῖς λεπταῖς ὁδοῦναι ἐπὶ τῶν ἀριστερῶν ὤμων κειμέναις, καὶ ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ προστρέχόντων. *Hom. xxxvii. de Filio Prodigio.* When vesting themselves for Mass, the bishop lets his stole hang straight down from around his neck on the right and left; the priest crosses it over his breast; and the deacon wears it resting on the left shoulder transversely uniting itself, like a belt, under the right arm. The stole may be seen on all the monumental effigies of bishops pontifically vested, in our old cathedrals; and it should be remarked that it is not crossed upon the breast, but always falls parallel just as it is worn at the present day by prelates. It is usually fringed, but does not expand so much at its extremities as the modern stole.



*This figure exhibits a Greek deacon, vested, as was anciently the manner in the Latin Church, with regard to the stole, and is still continued amongst the Greeks and Orientals.*

It is mentioned in all their liturgies. In the Greek rite, the stole assigned to the priest is carefully distinguished from the one allotted to the deacon, not only by a difference of appellation, but by the manner in which both are severally worn. The sacerdotal stole is termed *Επιτραχηλιον*, and put round the neck;\* the deacon's stole continues, as anciently, to be termed *Νεαριον*. It has inscribed upon it, in three several places, the word *αγιος*, or holy, and is cast over the left shoulder, from which it

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\* It may be distinctly seen in our plates of the Greek vestments in this chapter.

hangs unconfined both before and behind,\* except at communion, when it is folded in the form of a cross upon the breast, and its extremities are bound round the waist.† The Syrian liturgy denominates the stole by the term *Ouroro*; the Coptic gives it the same appellation by which it is designated by the Greeks.‡

#### XXXI.—ITS SPIRITUAL MEANING.

The mystic signification which the Church attaches to this portion of the Sacerdotal vestments, is beautifully expressed in the words of the prayer which the priest is directed by her to recite, when he puts it on:—‘Restore to me, O Lord, the robe of immortality, which was forfeited by the prevarication of our first parents, and though unworthy to celebrate so august a mystery, grant that I may attain to everlasting glory.’

#### XXXII.—THE CHASUBLE. XXXIII.—ITS FORM.

The sixth and last garment which the priest, who is about to offer up the holy sacrifice of the mass, puts on, is called the Chasuble, from the Latin word *casubula* or *casula*.

XXXIII.—This upper vestment descends both before and behind, some way down the person of the wearer. In England, France, and Belgium, a

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\* Goar, *Euchol. Græc.* p. 59. † Goar, *ibid.* p. 147.

‡ Renaudot, *tom.* ii. p. 54.





Ch. de Chatillon 1811

1811, 1812

*The Priest is about to perform the Mass  
 is about proceeding to the altar this figure shows the present Mass of the Priest  
 London Printed by Joseph Stodart 1811*



cross is marked upon the back ; whilst in Italy, and through other quarters of the Catholic world, it is more generally affixed upon the front part.



*A male figure in the act of prayer ; taken from a fresco-painting in one of the chambers in the Catacombs. See Aringhi, Roma Subterranea, tom. ii. p. 104. The garment is the ancient Penula, which was the original of the vestment now called Chasuble, and exhibits its ancient form. It is marked with the Clavus.*

#### XXXIV. — THE VESTMENTS OF THE JEWISH PRIESTHOOD.

Amongst the vestments which were assigned by the Almighty to the Jewish priesthood, when employed in sacrificing, we discover a garment corresponding to our chasuble, in the 'Tunic of the Ephod all of violet, in the midst whereof above shall be a hole for the head, and a border round

about it woven, as is wont to be made in the outmost parts of garments.’\*

XXXV.—ORIGIN OF THE CHASUBLE.

The chasuble derives its origin from a species of cloak which, amongst the ancient Romans, was called Pænula, and is supposed, by many commentators on the Scriptures, to be the same kind of mantle mentioned by St. Paul, in his second epistle to Timothy, who is instructed by the apostle to bring along with him, ‘the cloak that was left at Troas with Carpus.’ The toga, which possesses so much historical celebrity, was a majestic but cumbersome species of habiliment; and began to fall into disuse as early as the time of Augustus. That emperor frequently expressed his regret upon the subject; and by the promulgation of a law, ordaining that every senator who appeared in public, should be arrayed in the toga, endeavoured, but in vain, to rescue the garment peculiar to the Roman people,† from that neglect into which it was rapidly declining. To the toga was substituted the Pænula, which, in shape, was perfectly circular, with an aperture in the middle, to admit the head, while it muffled the arms and entire person of the wearer; and precisely such was the chasuble worn by the priest at mass, during more than one

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\* *Exodus*, C. xxviii. V. 31, 32. † 2 *Tim.* C. iv. V. 13.

† *Gens togata*.—*Virgilius*.





*A Greek Priest, Muffled in the Phrygian or Thracian*

*(Costume of the Priest of the Temple of Delphi)*

thousand years. The toga resembled the segment of a circle, and usually left the right arm uncovered and at liberty.\* There were two kinds of pænulæ; the more ancient one was short and narrow, and usually reserved for travelling; the other descended to the feet, and was very ample, and became the ordinary, and at first the distinctive, habit of the senatorian order; but, in process of time, was assumed by every person of respectability throughout the Roman empire. From this, and not from the toga, nor the shorter pænula, is derived our chasuble.

XXXVI.—PRESENT FORM AMONG THE GREEKS.

In the Greek Church, this vestment still retains its ancient form of a large round mantle, which covers the whole figure, and not unfrequently is starred all over with a multitude of small crosses.†

XXXVII.—ONCE COMMONLY WORN BY LAICS AND ECCLESIASTICS.

Up to the sixth century, the pænula was a civic habit, and worn, without discrimination, by laymen and ecclesiastics. But after the fashion of the age had invented some other vesture which superseded

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\* See *Le Costume des Peuples de l'Antiquité prouvé par les Monumens*, par André Lens, liv. v. c. ii. p. 247.

† As may be observed in the plate representing a Greek prelate blessing the people, at Num. XLIII. of this Chapter.

in its turn the *pænula* or chasuble, it continued unaltered in its form amongst the clergy, and was, in fine, employed by them as indicative of their order in society.

XXXVIII.—THEN BY ECCLESIASTICS ONLY.

After the use of the chasuble was laid aside by the secular portion of the community, and was retained by those alone who were dedicated to the service of the altar, still this garment was not exclusively reserved for the solemnization of the sacred mysteries, but was worn in common life by ecclesiastics for many years afterwards.

XXXIX.—USE OF IT RESTRICTED TO THE SANCTUARY.

A distinction, however, seems to have obtained, respecting its use within the sanctuary, towards the closing of the sixth century ; for we find that at the third Council of Toledo, celebrated in the year 589, it was ordained, that, in restoring degraded ecclesiastics to their former dignity :—‘ If a bishop, he was to receive the stole, the ring, and crosier : if a priest, the stole and chasuble : and if a deacon, the stole and alb.’ For a thousand years, the chasuble has been assigned to the priest, at the time of ordination, as the habit peculiar to his order, when about to offer up the holy Eucharistic sacrifice.\*

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\* See the *Sacramentary of Senlis*, written in 880 ; now



## XL.—THE CROSS SUPPLANTED THE LATUS-CLAVUS.

The ancient Romans, as it was observed when speaking of the stole, were accustomed to ornament their garments with scarlet stripes, which were either composed of pieces of linen tinged with that colour and sewed on, or were interwoven with the material itself. With such stripes they were particularly careful to adorn the pænula, or outward garment, as thus the importance or dignity of the wearer was more especially discernible. Amongst those ancient monuments still existing, which belong to, or so eminently serve to illustrate, the manners, civil as well as religious, of the early Christians, there are various examples of this custom. In the fresco-paintings which adorn the catacombs at Rome, may be seen several figures with their hands uplifted in the act of prayer, clad in the pænula, on which is marked the Latus-clavus, or stripe of scarlet.\*

## XLI.—WHY CURTAILED.

The graceful amplitude of the pænula or Roman dress of ceremony, when the toga fell into disuse, at first produced no inconvenience to the movements of the sacrificing priest, because a sufficient number of his assistants stood perpetually around his person, to arrange and sustain it according to

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preserved in the library of St. Genièvre, at Paris.—*Le Brun*, tom. i. p. 53.

\* See the figure at p. 631.

circumstances.\* But when the celebration of the Liturgy or Mass became more frequent, and the priest, every day offered up the holy sacrifice unattended by a deacon and a crowd of other ministers, he experienced the inconvenience of the chasuble, which formed, when extended out, a perfect circle unbroken by any opening, and fell round the body in such a manner as completely to envelope it.† Before, therefore, the hands and arms could be at liberty, it was requisite, either that some one should hold it elevated, or that it should be gathered up and folded on both sides above the shoulder. To adjust in this way a vestment of rich damask, or of cloth with embroidery and ornament, was almost impossible. As a remedy to the inconvenience, it was gradually abridged

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\* Traces of this are still discernible. At high mass the deacon and sub-deacon continue to take hold on the border of, and sometimes slightly elevate, the chasuble of the celebrant, whenever he performs such ceremonies as require the movement of the arms to be uncumbered; and which, at the period when the chasuble was circular, would have rendered necessary the attendance of some minister to gather up and sustain the ample folds of his vestment. Bishops to this day do not put on the maniple till after the 'Confiteor,' because it was then that the assistants anciently gathered up and arranged the borders of the encircling chasuble upon the shoulders, preparatory to the bishop's ascending the steps of the altar.

† This may be seen in the plates of the Greek pontiffs who still retain the ancient form of the chasuble.

of its flowing and majestic circular dimensions, and cut so as to assume the form it naturally took when supported by an attendant minister, or collected and gathered on the shoulders of the celebrant.\*



*Form of the ancient chasuble observable in old monuments. The present figure is copied from the sepulchral effigy of Bishop Simon, in Exeter cathedral. See Britton's Exeter Cathedral, p. 128.*

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\* The chasuble, during more than a thousand years,

## XLII.—TRACES OF ITS ANCIENT FORM.

Evident traces of this sacerdotal habit, fashioned according to its uncurtailed and ancient form, may be easily discerned on those antique statues of monks and bishops, reclining upon the beautiful but mutilated tombs, as well as in the figures on those storied windows which decorate almost every cathedral or abbey-church throughout the kingdom, and so eloquently attest the magnificence of former days, and supply such splendid and most authentic vouchers for the success with which the arts were cultivated by Englishmen before the change of religion, mis-called the Reformation.\* Two interesting works,

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retained its amplitude ; for, up to the thirteenth century, it still continued unabridged, and without any incision ; and at the present moment retains its ancient form in the Greek and Eastern Churches. In some particular places in France and on the continent, the chasuble in its ancient form is preserved as a monument of antiquity, and used on certain festivals.—Le Brun, *tom. i. p. 52.*

\* The nursing mother of the fine arts, is undoubtedly the Catholic religion ; and unless she had been banished from this island, precisely at the time when sculpture and painting were emancipating themselves from the trammels of ignorance and barbarism, the British school of art would, at this day, have been pre-eminent, and have produced works to rival the glorious wonders of Italy herself. This is not an idle boast, dictated by the spirit of an overweening patriotism. It is suggested by a review of our national literature, which exhibits such splendid coruscations of all those higher mental powers—fervid and

—*the Regal and Ecclesiastical Antiquities*, by

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poetic imagination—felicitous invention—pathos—loftiness of soul—a feeling exquisitely alive to all those various charms of inanimate or animated nature—endowments which are requisite to constitute a people that shall be capable either of appreciating what is grand and beautiful in architecture, sculpture, and painting; or of producing it and giving to sublime ideas, to ‘airy nothingness, a local habitation and a name,’ in colours or in marble. The land which produced such artists with the pen, as Shakspeare and Milton, surely may furnish others equally excellent with the chisel and the pencil. It is suggested by those magnificent cathedrals which adorn the country, and while they extort the admiration of foreigners, by their impressive style of architecture, by the profusion of their sculptures, and the richness of their painted glass, attest the capabilities of native English genius, and the effects of ancient piety. It is a memorable circumstance, not generally known, as Flaxman in his ‘*Lectures on Sculpture*,’ remarks, that ‘England was almost the first, on the revival of the arts, to cultivate sculpture, and that we possess some of the earliest and finest specimens of the art.’—‘Sculpture,’ observes the same writer, ‘continued to be practised in this country, with such zeal and success, that in the reign of Henry III. efforts were made deserving our respect and attention even at this day. It is very remarkable that Wells cathedral, the sculpture upon the west front of which presents the noblest, and most useful, and most interesting subjects possible to be chosen, was finished about two years after the birth of Cimabue, the restorer of painting in Italy; and the work was going on at the same time, that Nicola Pisano, the

*Strutt, and the Cathedral Antiquities of England,*

Italian restorer of sculpture exercised the art in his own country. It was also finished forty-six years before the cathedral of Amiens, and thirty-six years before the cathedral of Orvieto was begun; and it seems to be the first specimen of such magnificent and varied sculpture united in a series of sacred history, that is to be found in western Europe.' (p. 16.) 'The long and prosperous reign of Edward III. was as favourable to literature and liberal arts, as to the political and commercial interests of the country. So general were painting, architecture, and sculpture, encouraged and employed, that, besides the buildings raised in this reign, few sacred edifices existed which did not receive additions and decorations. The richness, novelty, and beauty of architecture may be seen in York and Gloucester cathedrals, and many of our other churches. Besides the extraordinary fancy displayed in various intricate and diversified figures which form the mullions of windows, they were occasionally enriched with a profusion of foliage and historical sculpture equally surprising for beauty and novelty.' (p. 18.) Speaking of the monument of Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, in St. Mary's church at Warwick, which is composed of one large and several small gilt bronze statues standing on niches, supporting canopies over them, (See Gough's *Sepulchral Monuments*, vol. ii.) the same eminent sculptor says; 'The figures are so natural and graceful, the architecture so rich and delicate, that they are excelled by nothing done in Italy of the same kind at this time, although Donatelli and Ghiberti were living when this tomb was executed, in the year 1439.' (p. 22.) Referring to the iconoclastic fury which maddened the lustful and tyran-

by Britton, as well as those illuminations which

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nical Henry VIII., the regal baby Edward VI., and ambitious Somerset, the pillars of England's modern Church, Flaxman observes;—'The commands for destroying sacred painting and sculpture, effectually prevented the artist from suffering his mind to rise, in the contemplation or execution of any sublime efforts; as he dreaded a prison or the stake, and reduced him in future to the miserable mimicry of monstrous fashions, or drudgery in the lowest mechanism of his profession;' (*p.* 28.) 'so that when the liberal art had been extinguished amongst the natives, it was found necessary to engage celebrated artists from other countries.'

With these facts before him, who can help compassionating the prejudices and puerility of certain weak, but book-learned men, who draw a circle round the globe, beyond which they dogmatically assert that the fine arts cannot flourish; and as they pretend that this zone of the beautiful which girdles the paradise of genius, passes through the fiftieth degree of latitude, point to England as necessarily existing in the desert. Alas for systems! It is a fact well authenticated that to Great Britain is Europe principally indebted for a new and splendid era in the arts, and their emancipation from that ignorance, deformity and affectation, to which they had been subjected by Bernini and his followers in Italy, and his imitators in northern Europe, the French school. This is attested not by native, but by the most eminent foreign writers on the fine arts, Cicognara, in his '*Storia della Scultura*,' and Missirini, in his '*Vita di Canova*,' men who are as competent as they are impartial in delivering their

accompany ancient manuscripts, will supply a large

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opinion. It was by following the directions of Gavin Hamilton, in studying perfect and elegant nature, and the ideal beauty stamped on works of Grecian art, that Canova, notwithstanding the sneers and the opposition of every other artist in Rome at the time, whether native or foreigner, succeeded in producing a new and chastened style in Italy and Europe; (*Vita di Canova da Missirini*, pp. 39-42, 53, 54) while our Flaxman, by his inimitable designs in illustration of Homer, Hesiod, the Greek tragedians, and of Dante, very much contributed to achieve this glorious revolution in the arts. These designs have procured for our countryman the admiration of all Europe, and extorted from artists in every country the admission that he has approached one of the nearest to the ancient Greeks, and have earned for him the title of 'the classic Flaxman.' These facts demonstrate that Great Britain does possess native talent, which, if heartened forwards by a patronizing Church, such as the Catholic is, and always has been, would place her as a nation amongst the very first in Europe, for her cultivation and perfection in the arts.

Some time after penning this note, the author was gratified on discovering how precisely his opinion on this subject coincided with that of the eloquent and sensible Denina, who remarks;—'Fù molto bene osservato che l'Inghilterra, produttrice insigne di tante egregie manifatture, e d'ingegni in ogni sorta di scienze sublimissimi, non produsse però pittori nè in numero molti, nè di qualità eccellenti: perciocchè quando le arti s'andarono propagando dall'Italia nelle province settentrionali, già s'era in quell'isola abolito il pubblico culto delle imma-



variety of examples.\* The vestments and ceremonies of the mass, as celebrated at the present day according to the Greek rite, will exhibit the chasuble in its primitive form, and exemplify the manner in which its ample and graceful folds were adjusted upon the shoulders of the celebrant.†

gini, onde si tolse ai genj nati al disegno e l'opportunità d'imparare, e lo stimolo del guadagno e della gloria per applicarvisi. Al contrario, in Italia il numero così de' pittori, come degli altri artisti, fù grandissimo: perocchè nel primo risorgimento della pittura non solamente vi era comunissima e grande la divozione alle sacre immagini, ma fors' anche perchè i frati trovando la pietà de' popoli spezialmente nelle città libere, più disposta che altrove a secondare le loro idee, ebbero agio grandissimo d'impiegare l'opera de' primi ristoratori del disegno ad innalzar fabbriche, a storiare e dipigner, or le tavole per gli altari, or le mura, e le volte delle chiese, de' chiostrj, de' capitoli, e de' refettorj: e la riuscita de' primi diede di animo ed impulso agli altri di coltivare le stesse arti.'—*Delle Rivoluzioni d'Italia* di Carlo Denina, vol. III, l. xii. c. 6. p. 402.

\* See plate xxiv. in Britton's *Canterbury*; plate xx. in his *Exeter*; plate xxvi. in his *York*; and plates i. and ii. of monuments in his *Salisbury Cathedral*. One of these latter monumental effigies is highly curious, as it proves that anciently in England, the cross was sometimes affixed to the fore, instead of the hind part of the chasuble, as it still continues to be, throughout Italy, and in various parts of the Continent.

† See the accompanying plates of the Greek vestments.

## XLIII.—MEANING OF ITS SEVERAL NAMES.

Our English term chasuble for this vestment, is derived, as we just now remarked, from the Latin *casubula*, or *casula*, which signifies a small dwelling. Such a name was affixed to this garment, on account of its fulness, and because it encircles the whole of the person, and thus constitutes, as it were, a shed or covering for the entire figure. It is as frequently denominated *planeta*, an appellation borrowed from the Greek Πλανητη—and which likewise bears a reference to its circling amplitude, and so forcibly expresses the wideness of its dimensions; for the word originally signifies any thing that is circuitous or wandering.

## XLIV.—ITS FIGURATIVE SIGNIFICATION.

More than one spiritual meaning has been attached by ecclesiastical writers to the chasuble. Our countryman Alcuin, who flourished about the year 800, regards it as emblematical of charity, for, as this virtue covers a multitude of sins, it is happily figured by the chasuble, which encircles the entire person of the priest. It is likewise said by St. Germanus, to represent the purple garment which the soldiers threw around our blessed Redeemer, when he was going to immolate himself a sacrifice for man upon the Cross; and is, therefore, very properly assumed by the priest when



*Portrait of a priest in the 17th century, as described  
 in the "Gathered in the 17th century" of the  
 "Gathered in the 17th century" of the "Gathered in the 17th century"*



about to reiterate that sacrifice, and make an unbloody commemoration of the bloody Passion of our Lord and show forth his death.

Marked as it is with the sign of the cross, the chasuble is likewise said to express the yoke of obedience, which is rendered so agreeable to the truly pious Christian, by his fervent love of God; and to signify the burden of the law, which becomes so light when carried with the proper spirit, and for the sake of him who thus entreats us;—‘Take up my yoke upon you; for my yoke is sweet, and my burden is light.’\*

XLV.—PRAYER AT PUTTING IT ON.

The latter signification is more immediately referred to in the prayer which the priest is directed by the Church to recite while he puts on the chasuble;—‘O Lord, thou hast declared, that thy yoke is sweet and thy burden light, grant that I may carry that which thou dost now impose upon my shoulders, in such a manner as to merit thy grace.’

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\* *St. Matt. C. xi. V. 30.*

## THE DALMATIC.



*The abbot Elfneth presenting a book to the monastery of St. Augustin at Canterbury, with a deacon, vested in the Dalmatic, supporting his crozier. From a manuscript of the tenth century now preserved in the Harleian library, in the British Museum.\**

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\* The figure of the abbot will illustrate what we have said concerning bishops wearing the dalmatic under the chasuble, p. 648. It would appear that Elfneth was a mitred

**XLVI.—THE DALMATIC. XLVII.—ITS FORM.****XLVIII.—ORIGIN OF ITS NAME.**

**XLVI.**—The dalmatic is a vestment worn by the deacon, whilst ministering at high Mass.

**XLVII.**—It is a long robe, open on each side, and differs from the chasuble by having a species of wide sleeve, and instead of being marked on the back with the cross, which superseded the senatorial *Latus-clavus*, is ornamented with two stripes that were originally the *Angustus-clavus*, worn upon their garments by the less dignified amongst the ancient Roman people.

**XLVIII.**—It derives its name from Dalmatia,\* the nation that invented it; and was originally a vest peculiar to the regal power; and, as such, became adopted, and was used in public, by several among the Roman emperors.†

In the earliest ages of the Church, the deacons wore a garment called *Colobium*, a kind of tight narrow tunic, with very short sleeves, and which, in the times of the Roman republic, was worn by

abbot, and consequently was vested like a prelate of the Church. *From num. 2908, of the Harleian manuscripts in the British Museum.*

\* *Dalmatia vestis primum in Dalmatia provincia Græciæ texta, est tunica sacerdotalis candida cum clavis ex purpura.*—S. Isidorus, *lib. xix. Origin. c. 21.*

† *Lampridius, p. 139.*

the more substantial citizens,\* but afterwards became a senatorial robe.†

XLIX.—WHEN ASSIGNED TO DEACONS.

In the reign of Constantine, the pontiff St. Sylvester conceded to the deacons of the Roman Church, the use of the Dalmatic on particular solemnities, a privilege which was gradually extended to the other Churches by succeeding popes, as we are informed by St. Gregory the Great.‡ The custom of wearing the dalmatic under the chasuble, was anciently peculiar to the Roman pontiff; but was afterwards allowed as an especial favour to certain prelates of the Church. For many centuries, however, every bishop has been entitled to assume this, together with his other vestments, whenever he celebrates high mass.§

\* Vide *Servium*, in iv. *Æneid*.

† *Cod. Theodos. lib. xiv. tit. 10*. The form of the Latin colobium is still preserved in the *saccos* worn by Greek metropolitan bishops. In reality, it differs very little from the dalmatic: it was of the same shape, but its sleeves were shorter, and it was not so wide and ample.

‡ *Dialogue xxvii* et Baronius, *ad Ann.* 508. We have already noticed the period when the use of the dalmatic probably became general throughout the Church, p. 627.

§ This may be authenticated by examining the sepulchral monuments erected to the ancient Catholic prelates of the English Church, many of whose tombs still orna-

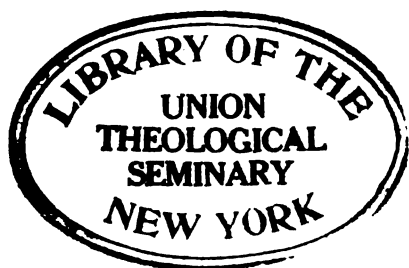




Ch. de Chantilly. 1811

12. M. 1811. 1811

*A Greek Priest in the Saccos or Colecium  
which resembles the 'Dalmatic' of the Latin Church  
London Printed for Joseph Pickers 'P' 1811.*



## L.—ITS ORIGINAL COLOUR AS A VESTMENT.

Anciently the dalmatic was white, and its Angusti-clavi, or narrow-stripes, were scarlet, according to St. Isidore,\* and as may be observed in the fresco-paintings of the Roman catacombs, and in the mosaics which decorate so many of the venerable churches of that metropolis of Christianity.†

The vestment which is assigned by the Greek rite to the deacon who officiates at the Eucharistic sacrifice, is denominated *στοιχαριον*,‡ and very closely resembles the corresponding dalmatic of the Latin Church. It extends further down the person, and its sleeves are closer and longer than ours.§ This garment is generally, though not always, white amongst the Orientals. With the Greeks, as in the Western Church, it is customary to employ purple-coloured vestments during the season of fasting.|| In general, however, white still continues, as anciently, to be employed amongst the Greeks, who have always regarded this colour for their

ment our old cathedrals, and would furnish ample materials to illustrate the history of native British art.

\* A. D. 596.

† See Aringhi, *Roma Subterranea*,—Bottari, *Roma Sotterranea*,—and Ciampini, *Vetera Monumenta*.

‡ Goar, *Euchol. Græc.* p. 110.

§ Goar, *ib.* p. 146. See figure, at p. 629.

|| A Greek writer, Demetrius Chomatenus, observes, that in the Greek Church purple vestments betoken mourning.—*Apud* Goar, *Euchol. Græc.* p. 110.

vestments with particular complacency, and attach to it a symbolic meaning. Their writers notice, that as the spiritual messengers of heaven have frequently appeared to men, arrayed in white and dazzling garments, we may appropriately consider the snow-white colour of those vestments, in which the ministers of the sanctuary are clad, to typify that angelic splendour which should emanate from the persons of those who are God's consecrated servants upon earth. Thus it was that St. Gregory Nazianzen was inspired to sing of the deacons and other attendants at the altar :—

Οι δ' ἄρ' υποδρηστήρες ἐν εἰμασι παμφανόωσιν  
Ἔστασαν ἀγγελικῆς εἰκόνες ἀγλαΐης.

*In Somnio de Anastasia.*

God's ministers, in splendid vests array'd,  
Types of the angels by their light betray'd,  
Were present there.

Similar remarks have been passed by writers of the Latin Church. The ancient form, the colour, and the ornaments of the dalmatic, as used in the Latin Church, may be traced in a succession of interesting monuments, which regularly extend through many hundred years, beginning with the sixth and concluding with the nineteenth century. In the mosaic which ornaments the apsis of St. Vitalis's church at Ravenna, erected 547 :\* in the apsis of St. Laurence out of the Walls, at Rome,

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\* Ciampini, *Monimenta Vetera*, tom. ii. p. 63.

a work of the year 548;\* in that of St. Mark's, in the same city, executed in 774;† and in the tribune of the church of St. Praxedes, ornamented with mosaics in 818,‡ we observe various figures of deacons vested in their dalmatics. In all these valuable monuments, the colour of this ecclesiastical garment is white; it is marked down the sides as at present, with two clavi, or stripes, which, instead of being as now of gold or other lace, are generally purple, and its shape almost exactly resembles the one according to which it continues to be fashioned throughout Italy. Like the dalmatic, as it is still made at Rome, it has sleeves, which are wide, but it reaches somewhat lower down the person.

Towards the commencement of the tenth century, however, we meet with written documents, which certify the use of dalmatics not only of white, but of those other various colours which are now employed.

LI.—THE TUNIC.    LII.—ITS PROPER FORM.

The tunic is the vestment assigned to the sub-deacon, in his ministry about the altar.

LII.—Were the regulations of the Church followed in all their precision, this garment would be longer, but not so ample as the dalmatic of the

\* Ciampini, *Monimenta Vetera*, tom. ii. p. 101.

† *Ibid.* p. 123.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 148.

deacon ; according, however, to a custom which everywhere prevails, both these vestments perfectly resemble each other.

LIII.—WHEN INTRODUCED.

It would appear, it was not until somewhat late that the use of the tunic was formally appropriated to sub-deacons, since no mention of this vestment can be discovered in the writings of the early Fathers ; nor is there anything resembling it discernible in the pictorial monuments of ecclesiastical antiquity ; and we know, from a passage in the letters of St. Gregory the Great, that in his time,\* the sub-deacons of the Roman Church were arrayed in a white alb when they officiated at the altar.†

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\* Anno 590. *Epist.* LXIV.

† Honorius, (A.D. 1130) in his enumeration of the vestments assigned at his time to the different ministers of the altar, informs us, that the sub-deacon's peculiar garment, which we now call tunic, and is sometimes denominated *tonicella* by liturgical writers, was known by the term *subtile*. After noticing that the sub-deacon was permitted the use of the amice, the alb, and girdle, he says : ' Duæ aliæ (vestes) adduntur. Subtile (tunica) quod et stricta tunica dicitur portat, ut se justitiæ quasi lorica induat, et in sanctitate et justitia Dei serviat, sudarium (manipulum) quo sordes a vasis detergantur, portat ut transacta mala sordium a se per pœnitentiam tergat.'—Honorius in *Gemma Animæ*, lib. ii. c. 229.

## LIV.—THE VEIL. LV.—ITS FORM.

LV.—At solemn high mass, the sub-deacon, during a part of the ceremony, has his arms and shoulders muffled with a species of scarf of an oblong shape, which is usually composed of the same material as the vestments, and is called the veil.

## LVI.—ITS USE.

In the primitive ages, the number of those who partook of the blessed sacrament every sunday, together with the priest, at the holy sacrifice, was very great ; and, in consequence, the paten or sacred disk, from which the sacramental species used to be distributed, was so large in its dimensions,\* that convenience required it to be removed from the altar as soon as the oblation had been made ; and not brought back until the period arrived for giving the communion to the people.

LVII.—WHY THE PATEN IS HELD ELEVATED. LVIII.—  
AND WHY COVERED WITH A VEIL.

Instead of depositing the paten upon either of those tables which stand near the altar, or carry-

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\* Amongst the various donations which were presented to the sovereign pontiffs and the churches at Rome, by royal and illustrious visitors to the see of St. Peter, Anastasius enumerates several of these patens or disks of gold and silver, which weighed as much as twenty-five or thirty pounds each.

it to the sacristy, the Roman ritual considered it more decorous and appropriate to consign it to the sub-deacon, who, by holding it in an elevated position, might thus announce to the assembly that the period for receiving the blessed sacrament would very soon approach, and silently admonish them to pray with greater fervour.\*

LVIII.—The custom of enveloping the sub-deacon with a veil during the time he holds the paten, was suggested to the Church by the ancient law, which prohibited the Levites from touching the consecrated vessels, or bearing them about uncovered. ‘Take,’ said the Lord to Moses, ‘take the sons of Caath from the midst of the Levites.... And when Aaron and his sons have wrapped up the sanctuary and the vessels thereof.....then shall the sons of Caath enter in, to carry the things wrapped up, and they shall not touch the vessels of the sanctuary lest they die.’† To exhibit an equal reverence towards those instruments dedicated to the service of her altars, and used in the sacrifice of the new and better covenant, the Church directs the sub-deacon, officiating at solemn high-

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\* At high-masses for the dead, and on Good Friday, the paten is not borne in this manner, because the more solemn ceremonies are omitted on those occasions; and communion is never given to the faithful on Good Friday, and but rarely distributed at masses for the dead.

† 2 *Numb. C. iv. V. 2-15.*



masses, to hold the paten enfolded in a veil; and prescribes to each inferior member employed about the sanctuary, as well as to every layman, not to touch any of her vessels. Moreover, she directs that the officiating priest, who gives benediction\* to the people with the blessed sacrament, should also have his hands, out of reverence towards it, enveloped with the veil which he wears on the occasion, in such a manner that they do not touch the Ostensorium,† or vessel in which it is enclosed.



*Figure muffled in a veil; taken from an ancient mosaic on one of the arches in the Church of St. Praxedes, at Rome.—Ciampini, Vet. Mon. tom. ii.*

#### LIX.—THE COPE. LX.—ITS FORM.

LX.—The cope resembles in its shape a flowing and ample cloak. It is open in the front, and

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\* This ceremony has been noticed at p. 160.

† This vessel has been described at p. 161.

fastens on the breast by clasps. To the part which corresponds to the shoulders of the wearer, is attached a piece of the same material, in form like the segment of a circle, and resembles a hood, which is usually adorned with lace and fringe.

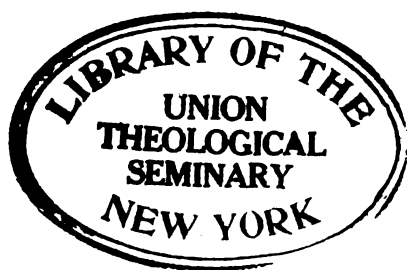
#### LXI.—ITS ORIGIN.

The prototype of our cope is easily discoverable amongst the garments of the ancient Romans, since we shall soon perceive, that, like the chasuble, it was a mantle deriving its origin from the *pænula*, which it perfectly resembled, with this variation, that while it encircled the entire person, the cope was open in the front, and adapted to defend its wearer from the severities of the season, the variations of the weather, and from rain, by the addition of a cowl or hood. Necessity, not splendour, introduced this robe amongst the sacred vestments; and the Latin *pluviale*, or rain-cloak, the term by which it still continues to be designated, will immediately suggest its primitive use to every learned reader. Its appropriation, as a sacerdotal garment may be referred to that epoch when the popes were accustomed to assemble the people, during the penitential seasons of the year, at some particular church, which had been previously indicated for that purpose; and thence proceed with them, in solemn procession and on foot, to some one or other of the more celebrated basilical churches of Rome, to hold what was



The Pope

and a Priesthood in the year 1848, by J. H. P. 1848.



called a station. To protect the person of the pontiff from the rain that might overtake the procession on its way, the pluviale, or cope, was on such occasions assumed by him at the commencement of the ceremony.\* It has been employed at the altar ever since, and is worn by bishops and by priests on different occasions, but particularly at vespers.†

#### LXII.—COLOURS OF THE VESTMENTS.

In her vestments, the Church employs five different colours. On the feasts of our Lord, of the blessed Virgin Mary, of the angels, and of those amongst the saints who were not martyrs, she makes use of white;—not only to signify the stainless purity of the Lamb and of his Virgin Mother, but to figure that ‘Great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and tribes, and peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne, and in sight of the Lamb, clothed with white robes.’‡ On the feasts of Pentecost, of the Invention and Exaltation of the Cross, of the apostles and martyrs, she employs red, to typify those fiery tongues

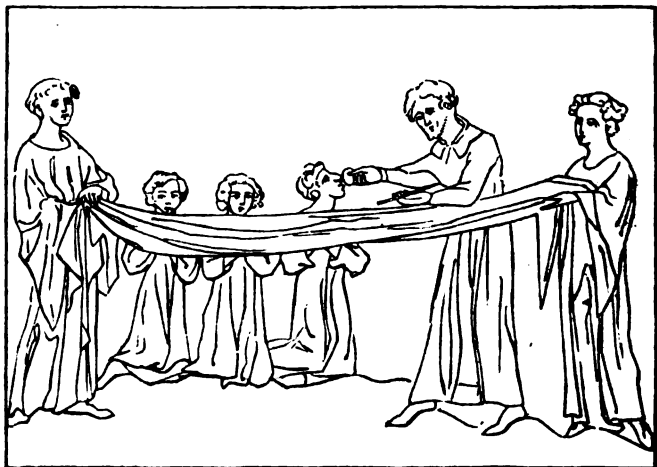
\* Bonanni, *Numismata Pontificum*, &c. tom. i. p. 2.

† The kings of England, at their coronation, are invested with the following ecclesiastical garments:—the dalmatic or colobium; the tunic; the stole; and the cope or pall.

‡ *Apoc. C. vii. V. 9.*

that rested on the heads of the apostles, when the Holy Ghost descended visibly among them ; and in reference to the effusion of blood by Christ and his faithful followers. On the greatest part of the sundays, the vestments are green. Purple is the colour assigned for the penitential times of Advent, and of Lent, for the Ember-days, and for the several vigils throughout the year ; whilst black is reserved for the office of Good Friday, and for masses of the dead.

### THE SURPLICE.



*The form of the Surplice used in England before the change in religion.  
From a Manuscript in the British Museum.\**

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\* With the press-mark 2 B. VII. It is supposed to have been done at the commencement of the fourteenth century. — *Strutt's Regal and Ecclesiastical Antiquities of England ; preface to the Supplement.* The Catholic reader

## LXIII.—THE SURPLICE. LXIV.—ITS ANTIQUITY.

This is that white linen garment which is worn not by the priest only, but is permitted to be assumed by the lowest minister, who officiates at the celebration of divine service.

LXIV.—The use of white garments by the members of the sanctuary, is continually referred to by the holy fathers. This custom is most particularly noticed by St. Jerom,\* and afterwards by the Council of Narbonne, held in 589; which, in one of its decrees, ordains, that neither deacon, sub-deacon, nor lector, who is one of the inferior clergy, shall lay aside the alb, or white tunic, until the mass be entirely concluded.

## LXV.—ITS ANCIENT FORM.

Honorius, in the year 1130, describes the surplice as a white loose vest, that reached down to the feet;† and from several passages in the works of ecclesiastical writers, and in the canons of

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will immediately detect that the figure of the priest administering the Blessed Sacrament, is placed on the wrong side of the communion-cloth. Such, however, is his position in the manuscript-illumination; and the author, from his anxiety to exhibit as faithful copies as possible of those original designs from which he borrowed his illustrations, would not allow a proposed correction of this error.

\* *Ann.* 376. *Lib.* i. *contra Pelag.*

† *Gemma Animæ*, *lib.* i. c. 132.

various provincial synods,\* it would appear, that the surplice was a variation of the alb, from which it differed, during a long period of years, merely by being somewhat shorter, and having wider sleeves. That the surplice, used in catholic England, answered this description, and was long, with flowing sleeves,—and though more ample, perfectly resembled the form of the surplice in use on the continent, in Italy, and especially in Rome, is evident from the illuminations of old English manuscripts and legends of the saints; a fact which may be authenticated by referring to Strutt's *Regal and Ecclesiastical Antiquities of England*,† and the engraving at the head of this section.‡

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\* See Thomassinus, *Vet. et Nov. Eccles. Discip.* v. i. p. 390.

† This is corroborated not only by the examination of several ancient illuminated missals and manuals, but in the clearest manner by referring to Archbishop Winchelsey's ordinance, *De Ecclesiis Ædificandis*, p. 252 of Lyndwood's *Provinciale*, Oxford, Ed. 1679. The primate requires that each parish-church be provided with 'Tria superpellicia,' (one for the priest, one for the deacon, and one for the sub-deacon) 'et unum rochetum.' The learned commentator remarks:—'Rochetum differt a superpellicio quia superpellicium habet manicas pendulas, sed rochetum est sine manicis, et ordinatur pro clerico ministraturo sacerdoti vel forsitan ad opus ipsius sacerdotis in baptizando pueros, ne per manicas ipsius brachia impediuntur.' Winchelsey was primate from 1294 to 1313. Lyndwood flourished in the reigns of Henry V. and Henry VI.

‡ It is to be lamented that hitherto no general attempt



## LXVI.—ORIGIN OF ITS NAME.

Durandus, who composed his work on the *Divine Offices*, about the year 1286, traces up the etymology of the Latin *Superpelliceum*, whence it is obvious our English appellation Surplice is derived, to a custom which anciently prevailed in the Church, of wearing tunics made from the skins of such animals as the country furnished, over which was cast a white linen alb or vest, denominated from that circumstance of its being worn over fur, *Superpelliceum*.

## LXVII.—ITS FIGURATIVE SIGNIFICATION.

Whilst indicating the derivation of its name,

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has been made to reproduce the old English surplice within our sanctuaries. Independent of possessing a title to our reverence on account of being a venerable relic of our once Catholic national Church—an incident alone sufficient to demand the restoration of its ancient form—this vestment comes recommended to our good taste by its intrinsic gracefulness. Its ample and majestic sleeves and flowing drapery, render it more dignified and becoming than the present winged surplice, introduced amongst us from France. Not only is this French garment foreign to us, but in itself is inelegant and inconvenient. Let us hope, however, that ere long, as the study of ecclesiastical antiquities, but of those of our ancient British Church in particular, becomes more extended, the surplice will be again fashioned according to that graceful model which still prevails through Italy, and once prevailed in England, prior to the much to be lamented change of religion.

Durandus has also pointed out the spiritual meaning of the surplice; which, as he remarks, has been regarded as symbolical of that robe of innocence, purity, and righteousness, that our divine Redeemer purchased for the human race, by the price of his glorious atonement, and with which he arrays the soul of the regenerated, or repentant sinner; and effaces man's iniquities, figured by the skins of animals; since it was in garments formed from such materials that fallen Adam, after being chased from Paradise, was covered.\*

The surplice is very appropriately assigned to the Acolytes, or youths, who answer and attend upon the priest at mass; for, 'Samuel ministered before the face of the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod.'†

\* Superpelliceum eo quod antiquitus super tunicas pelliceas de pellibus mortuorum animalium factas induebatur, quod adhuc in quibusdam Ecclesiis observatur, representantes quod Adam post peccatum tallibus vestitus est pelliciis.—*Durand. lib. iii. cap. 1.*

† 1 *Kings*, C. ii. V. 18. (Protest. Vers. 1 *Samuel*, &c.)

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### CHAPTER XIII.

#### ON BLESSED OR HOLY WATER.

1. Holy water of Apostolic origin.—2. Form of blessing the Holy water.—3. Object of the Church in using it.—4. Why salt is mingled with the water.—5. Why exorcisms are pronounced over the salt and water.—7.—Used in the Greek Church.—6. Sprinkling of the Altar and Congregation.—8. Why Holy water is placed at the entrance of our Temples.



## PART THE SECOND.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

#### ON BLESSED OR HOLY WATER.

THE ordinance of Almighty God, promulgated by the lips of Moses, concerning the *water of aspersion*, and the mode of sprinkling it, are minutely noticed in Chap. xix. of the book of Numbers. In the book of Exodus, we read that the Lord issued the following directions to Moses :—‘ Thou shalt make a brazen laver with its foot to wash in : and thou shalt set it between the tabernacle of the testimony and the Altar. And the water being put into it, Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and feet in it when they are going into the tabernacle of the testimony, and when they are to come to the Altar, to offer on it incense to the Lord.’\*

That it was a practice with the Jews, not merely peculiar to the members of the priesthood, but observed amongst the people, for each individual to wash his hands before he presumed to pray ; is

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\* 1 *Exod. C. xxx. V. 18-20.*

a well attested fact.\* The Church adopted this, as well as several other Jewish ceremonies which she engrafted on her ritual;† and St. Paul apparently borrows from such ablutions, the metaphor he employs while thus admonishing his disciple Timothy;—‘ I will that men pray in every place lifting up pure hands.’ That in the early ages, the faithful used to wash their hands at the threshold of the Church before they entered, is expressly mentioned by a number of writers.§

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\* See Barónius, *Anno 57, c. viii.* † Barónius, *ibid.*

‡ 1 *Tim.* C. ii. V. 8. § Tertullian, *de Orat.* c. ii. St. John Chrysostom, in *Joan. hom.* vii. in *fine.* Eusebius, (A.D. 320) in the description of the magnificent church erected at Tyre by the bishop of that city, Paulinus, specifies that fountains were made to spring up just before the portals, where the faithful might wash their hands previously to entering the temple. (*l. x. c. 4.*) St. Paulinus of Nola, (A.D. 403) mentions the fountains which, in his time, stood in the porch of St. Peter’s Church at Rome, and had been constructed for a similar purpose. Writing to his friend Severus, the same holy prelate furnishes him with a minute account of the church, the building and embellishment of which had just been finished. He recites the verses, of his own composition, which he had affixed in various parts of this basilica; and from those which were inscribed over an arch in the vestibule, we gather that St. Paulinus had, near this spot, placed a vase containing water:—

Sancta nitens famulis interluit atria lymphis  
Cantharus, intrantumque manus lavat amne ministro.  
*Epist. xii. ad Severum, p. 153.*

## I.—HOLY WATER OF APOSTOLIC ORIGIN.

The introduction of blessed or holy water must be referred to the times of the Apostles. That it was the custom in the very first ages of the Church, not only to deposite vessels of water at the entrance of those places where the Christians assembled for the celebration of divine worship ; but also, to have vases containing water mingled with salt, both of which had been separated from common use, and blessed by the prayers and invocations of the priest, is certain. A particular mention of it is made in the Constitutions of the Apostles ;\* and the Pontiff Alexander, the first of that name, but the sixth in succession from St Peter whose chair he mounted in the year 109, issued a decree by which the use of Holy water was permitted to the faithful in their houses.†

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In corners of the little churches in the Roman catacombs, is often observed a low column, supporting a shallow marble, or terra-cotta vase intended to hold the blessed or holy water. Boldetti, *Osserv. sopra i Cimit. di Roma*, p. 16, 35.

\* *Lib. viii. cap. 29.* Apud Labbeum, *Concil. Gen. tom. i. p. 493.*

† Hic (Alexander) constituit aquam aspersionis cum sale benedici in habitaculis hominum. (Anast. *de Vitis Rom. Pont. tom. ii. p. 78.*) Hence it will appear that this pope did not introduce holy or blessed water, but only extended the use of a custom which he found established in the Church at his accession to the pontifical dignity.

A fresco-painting in the Catacombs at Rome, attests the practice among the primitive Christians of sprinkling holy water at their religious assemblies.



*In the Catacombs of St. Agnes out of the Walls. See Bottari, Roma Sotterranea, tom. iii. p. 171, tav. cxlviii.*

On the ceiling of one of those sepulchral chambers which have their entrance at the Church of St. Agnes out of the Walls\* are depicted five figures each holding in one hand a vase denominated *Situlus*,† similar to those in which the holy water is at present carried about in our ceremonies. Four of these figures support in the right hand branches, as it would appear, of the palm-tree; but the fifth bears

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\* This fresco-painting, together with a learned description of it, was published by Bottari, in his *Roma Sotterranea*, t. iii. p. 70.

† Georgius, *Liturgia Romani Pontificis*, t. i. p. 129.



elevated a tufted aspergillum, which exactly corresponds to the one which is still employed at the ceremony of sprinkling holy water.

## II.—FORM OF BLESSING THE HOLY WATER.

Having signed himself with the sign of the Cross, the priest commences the benediction of the salt and water before him, in the following manner :—  
 ‘ I exorcise thee, O creature of salt, by the living †\* God, by the true † God, by the holy † God ; by that God, who by the prophet Eliseus commanded thee to be cast into the water to cure its barrenness ; that thou mayst by this exorcism be made beneficial to the faithful, and become to all of those who make use of thee, healthful both to soul and body ; and that in what place soever thou shalt be sprinkled, all illusions and wickedness and crafty wiles of Satan may be chased away, and depart from that place ; and every unclean spirit commanded in his name, who is to come to judge the living and the dead and the world by fire. Amen.

*‘ Let us pray.*

‘ O Almighty and everlasting God, we most humbly implore thy infinite mercy that thou wouldst vouchsafe by thy power to bless † and to sanctify

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\* At those words where the cross † is thus inserted, the priest makes the sign of the cross, with his hand outstretched ; over the thing he is blessing.

✠ this thy creature of salt, which thou hast given for the use of mankind ; that it may be to all who take it, for the health of mind and body ; and that whatever shall be sprinkled with it may be freed from all uncleanness, and from all assaults of wicked spirits, through our Lord Jesus Christ,' &c.

After this the Priest proceeds to the blessing of the water as follows.

*The Exorcism of the water.*

' I exorcise thee, O creature of water, in the name of God ✠ the Father Almighty, and in the name of Jesus Christ ✠ his Son our Lord, and in the virtue of the Holy ✠ Ghost ; that thou mayst, by this exorcism, have power to chase away all the power of the enemy ; that thou mayst be enabled to cast him out, and put him to flight with all his apostate angels, by the virtue of the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who is come to judge the living and the dead, and the world by fire. Amen.

*' Let us pray.*

' O God, who for the benefit of mankind hast made use of the element of water in the greatest sacraments, mercifully hear our prayers, and impart the virtue of thy blessing ✠ to this element, prepared by many kinds of purifications ; that this

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\* Similar to this is the form of blessing the water, ordained in the Constitutions of the Apostles, *lib. viii. c. 29.*

thy creature, made use of in thy mysteries, may receive the effect of thy divine grace, for the chasing away devils, and curing diseases; and that whatsoever shall be sprinkled with this water in the houses or places of the faithful, may be free from all uncleanness, and delivered from evil: let no pestilential spirit reside there, no infectious air: let all the snares of the hidden enemy fly away: and may whatever envies the safety, or repose of the inhabitants of that place, be put to flight by the sprinkling of this water, that the welfare, which we seek by the invocation of thy holy name, may be defended from all sorts of assaults, through our Lord Jesus Christ,' &c.

Then the priest mingles the salt with the water, saying:—

‘ May this salt and water be mixed together, in the name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son, ✠ and of the Holy ✠ Ghost. Amen.

V. ‘ The Lord be with you.

A. ‘ And with thy spirit.

‘ *Let us pray.*

‘ O God, the author of invincible power, King of an empire that cannot be overcome, and for ever magnificently triumphant; who restrainest the forces of the adversary, who defeatest the fury of the roaring enemy, who mightily conquerest his malicious wiles: we pray and beseech thee, O Lord,

with dread and humility, to regard with a favourable countenance this creature of salt and water, to enlighten it with thy bounty, and to sanctify it with the dew of thy fatherly goodness, that wheresoever it shall be sprinkled, all infestation of the unclean spirit may depart, and all fear of the venomous serpent may be chased away, through the invocation of thy holy name; and that the presence of the Holy Ghost may be everywhere with us; who seek thy mercy through our Lord Jesus Christ,' &c.

### III.—OBJECT OF THE CHURCH IN USING IT.

It is the never-ceasing solicitude of the Church to render her children holy and undefiled, and to preserve them from every thing which can contaminate, or injure them. In labouring to achieve this object, she connects her prayers and aspirations with all those exterior signs and ceremonies which are most likely to express her benevolent desires. The property of water is to cleanse, and it is the type of purity; while salt is used as a preservative against corruption, and is an emblem of wisdom.\* Water and salt commingled, blessed, and sprinkled on the people, form a very appropriate symbol to exhibit the desire felt by the Church for our purification and preservation from every thing contagious.

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\* *Col. C. iv. V. 6.*

## IV.—WHY SALT IS MINGLED WITH THE WATER.

When the men of Jericho complained to Eliseus that the waters were bad, and the ground barren, the Prophet said to them;—‘Bring me a new vessel, and put salt into it.’—‘And when they had brought it, he went out to the spring of the waters, and cast the salt into it, and said :—Thus saith the Lord : I have healed these waters, and there shall be no more in them death or barrenness.” \*

The Church, in imitation of the Prophet, invokes the divine power on the salt, that it may have an efficacy from God to preserve her members from every thing that can be noxious to them.

## V.—WHY EXORCISMS ARE PRONOUNCED OVER THE SALT AND WATER.

The priest exorcises the water and the salt. Exorcise is a Greek term which signifies to ‘conjure,—to speak imperatively.’ The Church is well aware that man, by his corruption, had perverted to the service of the demon, those things which were intended for the glory of God, and she hears St. Paul proclaim that;—‘The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly.’† But she knows that every thing ‘is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.’‡

Hence it is, that she exorcises and blesses many creatures. She exorcises salt and water, by com-

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\* 4 *Kings*, C. ii. V. 19-21. (Protest. Version, 2 *Kings*, &c.)

† *Rom. C.* viii. V. 20.

‡ 1 *Tim. C.* iv. V. 5.

manding them, on the part of God, and through the merits of the Cross of Jesus Christ, not only to be innocuous to man, but to become serviceable to him while labouring in the work of salvation.

This, in reality, is the object of all her exorcisms pronounced over inanimate creatures; and it should not be forgotten that it is a pious custom with her, to bless every thing which is assigned for holy purposes.\*

#### VI.—SPRINKLING OF THE ALTAR AND THE CONGREGATION.

It is usual to sprinkle the altar and the people, on Sundays, immediately before commencing the celebration of high mass. As holy or blessed water was instituted for the express design of insinuating to Christians that they were to keep a cautious guard against the attacks of Satan, and to preserve themselves, as much as possible, immaculate from the contagion of sinfulness; the purpose of this aspersion, is to warn the faithful to purify themselves before they presume to assist at the holy sacrifice—that *clean* oblation predicted by the Prophet Malachias.† The words recited by the

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\* Protestants have retained some remnants of the ancient religion in this regard; for churches and burial-places still continue to be blessed by the bishops of the establishment; and the oil with which the sovereign is anointed at the coronation, is particularly specified in the Protestant ritual, as consecrated.

† *Mal. C. i. V. 11.*

Priest and chanted by the choir during the ceremony, are quite appropriate. ‘Thou shalt sprinkle me, O Lord, with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed; thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow.’\*

The blood of the Lamb was sprinkled on the door-posts of the Israelites in Egypt† with hyssop; as well as the waters of expiation in which were mingled the ashes of the red cow, for the purification of the unclean and leprous.‡

The second object which the Church has in view while performing this ceremony, is to call to our remembrance the baptism by which we become regenerated unto Christ.

#### VII.—USED IN THE GREEK CHURCH.

The Greek, like the Latin Church, practises this rite, with this sole difference, that it confines the observance of it to the first, instead of every Sunday of each month,§ as may be observed by consulting their Missal or Euchology.|| At the conclusion of blessing the holy water, the priest is directed by the rubrics of the Euchology, to sprinkle it around the church and upon the congregation, just as we do.¶

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\* Ps. I., V. 9. † Exod. C. xii. V. 22. ‡ Numb. C. xix. V. 12, 18.

§ Goar, *Euchologium Græcorum*, p. 451.

|| *Ibid.* p. 441.

¶ *Ibid.* p. 448.

Once in the year, on the feast of the Epiphany, the Greeks, Armenians, and other Oriental Christians perform a more solemn blessing of holy water in commemoration of the baptism of Christ in the river Jordan. The Greeks not only at present, but from the earliest ages of the Church, have been taught to manifest a particular devotion towards this festival; and now as anciently provide themselves at vespers, on the vigil of its celebration, with some of the newly blessed water, which they carry home from church to their houses, where they sprinkle a part, and preserve the remainder with much care until the annual festival comes round again.\* The antiquity of such a custom amongst the Greek and Eastern Christians, is attested by a number of their old and recent writers. From amongst the former, it will be quite sufficient to adduce St. Chrysostom.† In the sermon which the eloquent bishop of Constantinople once delivered on one of these solemnities, he observes;— ‘ This is the day on which Christ was baptized, and on which he sanctified the nature of the waters. Hence it is that every one towards the midnight of this festival, provides himself with some of the water, which he conveys home, and carefully preserves during the whole year, as the waters which were this day sanctified.’‡ The solemnity and

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\* Goar, *Euchologium Græcorum*, p. 467. † A.D. 398.

‡ Αυτὴ ἐστὶν ἡ ἡμέρα, καθ’ ἣν ἐβαπτισατο, καὶ τὴν τῶν ὑδάτων ἡγιασε



splendour with which this blessing of water, on the Epiphany, is performed by the Armenians, particularly in Persia, and by the Russians at St. Petersburg, have been noticed by every traveller in those countries.

VIII.—WHY HOLY WATER IS PLACED AT THE ENTRANCE  
OF OUR TEMPLES.

Thesame pious motives have induced the Church to place vases containing blessed, or as it is denominated, holy water, at the entrance of her temples.\*

Into these the faithful immerse the tips of their right-hand fingers, and afterwards make the sign of the cross, as they repeat the following invocation to the holy and undivided Trinity :—‘ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’ In this manner it is that the Church en-

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φυσιν. Διά τοι τοῦτο καὶ ἐν μεσονυκτίῳ κατὰ τὴν εορτὴν ταύτην ἀπαντες ὑδρεῖονται καὶ οἴκαδε τὰ νάματα ἀποτίθενται καὶ εἰς ἐναντὸν ολοκληρον φυλάττουσιν ἅτε δὴ σήμερον ἀγιασθέντων τῶν ὑδάτων.

—S. Chrysos. *Hom.* lxxiv.

\* The Greeks and Orientals place a vase containing water at the entrance of their churches. Amongst the Greeks, it has a particular place assigned to it in the vestibule, and is designed by the term of *φιαλε*, or fountain of springing water. (Goar, *Euchol. Græc.* p. 13.) The Christians of St. Thomas, as the Nestorians of Malabar were at first denominated, have a vessel of blessed or holy water standing at the doors of their churches, which they take in signing themselves with the cross as they enter. (Le Brun, *tom.* vi. p. 567.)

deavours to address her children at the very threshold of the tabernacle, and to exhort them to understand, by the water which she holds out to them, that they must bring a purity and cleanness of heart to the sanctuary ; and thus comply with the exhortations of St. Paul, and ‘ lift up pure hands ’ to the throne of him whose cross they have just figured on their foreheads, and through the merits of whose death and suffering they can alone expect to receive the pardon of their sins, and to obtain eternal happiness.

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### CHAPTER XIV.

#### ON THE CREED.

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## PART THE SECOND.

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### CHAPTER XIV.

#### ON THE CREED.

THE Creed is an abridgement of the Christian doctrine, and is usually denominated the Symbol of Faith.

##### I.—MEANING OF THE TERM SYMBOL.

The word Symbol means a sign to distinguish things from one another. To the primitive Christians the Symbol or Creed was what the watchword is, at the present moment, to an army in the field—a signal by which a friend may be immediately discriminated from an enemy. As the Creed was the medium through which the true believer was recognized amid Heretics and Gentiles, it became customary to say, '*Da signum*,'—'*Da symbolum*,' give the sign, repeat the Symbol or Creed.

##### II.—FIVE FORMS OF CREED. III.—THE APOSTLES'.

There are five Creeds:—the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Constantinopolitan Creed,

the one which passes, though erroneously, under the name of St. Athanasius, and the Creed of Pius IV.

III.—That the Creed which is attributed to the Apostles, and bears their name, was, in reality, drawn up by them, has been ably demonstrated.\* This was the only one in use amongst the ancient Christians, and for the first three centuries was not committed to writing, lest it should fall into the hands of unbelievers; but was delivered down by oral tradition. With the exception of Tertullian, no author, before the reign of Constantine the Great, presumed to note down this Creed. After that period, when the danger of its being ridiculed by Jew or Gentile, had passed away, it began to be penned, and first of all appeared in the works of St. Athanasius and of St. Basil.†

#### IV.—THE NICENE.

In the fourth century, Arius, a priest in the Church of Alexandria, denied the Divinity of the Word made flesh. To condemn the error of this heresiarch, the Church, in the year 325, convoked a general council at Nice, a city of Bithynia. The assembled Fathers found it expedient to develop the meaning of the second article of the Apostles' Creed by a more copious explanation of its sense and doctrine. The exposition of the council was

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\* Vide *Disser.* xii. *Sæculi* I. *Natalis Alexandri.*

† *Benedictus* xiv. *lib.* II. c. viii. *sec.* 4, *de Sac. Missæ.*

engrafted on the Apostolic Symbol, which, along with this verbal addition, acquired a new denomination, and proceeded to be entitled the Symbol of Nice, or Nicene Creed.

#### V.—THE CONSTANTINOPOLITAN.

A short time afterwards, Macedonius, bishop of Constantinople, impugned the Divinity of the Holy Ghost. The Church was again obliged to call a general council, which met at Constantinople in the year 381, and delivered to the faithful, the genuine belief upon this litigated article of Faith. The explanation furnished by the council was appended to the Nicene Creed, and this second enlargement of the Symbol of the Apostles was called the Creed of Constantinople.

#### VI.—THE ATHANASIAN.

About this time a multitude of innovators attempted to pollute the pure stream of apostolic doctrine, by commingling with it their errors concerning the essence and properties of Christ's humanity. There were in the Church many zealous pastors who arose to guard the fountain-stream of faith from such contaminations, but amongst them the unknown author of that Creed which was immediately recognized so orthodox and beautiful, that, by unanimous consent, it was attributed to the most celebrated champion of the Faith, St.

Athanasius, and still passes under his name, though ascertained not to be his production.

VII.—WHAT CREED SAID AT MASS.

The Creed which is now repeated in the Liturgy, is in reality the Creed, not of Nice, but of Constantinople. It was not before the decline of the eighth, or the commencement of the ninth, century, a period when the discipline of the secret had long been abandoned, that the Creed began to be recited at Mass.

VIII.—WHEN SAID AT MASS.

The Creed is said every Sunday during the year, and on all those feasts which are in a manner indicated in it; such as the different festivals instituted in honour of Christ, of his mother the blessed Virgin Mary, and of the Apostles and Doctors of the Church, by whose arduous labours and writings the doctrine contained in this Symbol of Christianity has been disseminated through the world.

IX.—CREED OF PIUS IV.

Like the last three Creeds, that of Pius IV., so denominated from the pope under whose pontificate it was framed, was suggested by the exigencies of the period; and was drawn up to exhibit a summary of the genuine doctrines of Christ, at an epoch when the innovators of the sixteenth century



were employing every expedient to decoy the faithful into error.

**X.—ALL ANNOUNCE THE SAME FAITH.**

It should be carefully remembered that in these several successive Creeds, no new doctrines are promulgated, nor is any addition made to the code of Faith delivered to the Church by the Apostles. They are all the same in substance as the Apostles' Creed; but unfold its doctrines, and present an explanation of its several parts, in a more precise and intelligible manner.

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### CHAPTER XV.

#### ON THE DIPTYCHS.

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## PART THE SECOND.

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### CHAPTER XV.

#### ON THE DIPTYCHS.

As the subject of the ancient Diptychs is intimately woven with some varied and useful, no less than interesting information ; it is presumed that, to the inquisitive reader, any investigation, however limited, concerning these curious monuments which are repeatedly referred to by the Fathers of the Church, and writers on ecclesiastical history, will not be altogether unacceptable.

#### I.—THEIR NAME. II.—FORM. III.—AND USE.

The diptychs were originally one of those presents that the newly chosen Roman Consul, on entering upon his office, distributed amongst his friends. As their name implies, the Diptychs\* were composed of two folding tablets, in general, made of

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\* The Greek Διπτυχον is composed of Δυο, 'two,' and πτυξ πτυχας, which is derived from πτυσσω, 'to fold.'

ivory, though sometimes of box-wood or silver; and so connected together by hinges, that they could be shut or opened like a book. The exterior surface was carved in basso-rilievo, and usually exhibited the portrait of the Consul,\* or some scene representing the Circensian games, which he proposed to celebrate for the public amusement during his occupation of the curule chair.

Upon the interior face was written either an epistle which accompanied the official present, or some poetical panegyric on the recently elected magistrate himself.†

IV.—WHY PRESENTED TO THE CHURCH. V.—HOW USED.

Amongst the crowds of gentiles who daily embraced the faith of Christ, there were several illustrious individuals who, along with other offerings that they bestowed upon the Church, presented these consular diptychs, which were always regarded as valuable and distinguished objects. A becoming respect for the volume containing the sacred record, as well as for all those books that were employed in the celebration of the holy eucharistic sacrifice

\* Claudianus, *Lib. iii. in Stilicon. V. 345 et seqq.*

† So much importance came to be attached to these ivory diptychs, that, by a law promulgated in 380, by Theodosius and Arcadius, all persons, excepting the ordinary Consuls, were prohibited from distributing them as official presents.—*Cod. Theod. lib. xv. tit. 9. l. 1.*

and other hallowed rites of our religion, suggested to the ancient Christians the idea of enveloping them with every species of covering that was precious, on account either of the richness of its material, or of the elaborate workmanship with which it happened to be ornamented. Such magnificent covers presented themselves in the ancient diptychs; neither any demur was made, or scruple started about employing, in such a service, articles that were figured with secular practices and gentile superstitions; on the contrary, they were esteemed as the *spolia opima* which the temples of Christianity could exultingly display, as not the least distinguished amongst those signal proofs of its triumphs over paganism. From the piety of the first believers, therefore, arose the custom of employing these consular diptychs\* as coverings for the sacred Scriptures, the books of the liturgy, and other sacred writings.

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\* The effect of such a practice has been, that a number of consular diptychs, and several other objects connected with the Fine Arts, which would have otherwise been irreparably lost, have descended, almost uninjured, to us from the ancients. The magnificent sardonix cameo, representing the Apotheosis of Augustus, the most precious monument of its kind known to be in existence, and now in the *Bibliothèque du Roi*, at Paris, was once attached, as a covering, to one of the sides of the grand missal belonging to the Chapel Royal at Paris.—Gori, *Thesaurus Diptychorum*, tom. iii. p. 60.

REGISTERS OF THE DEAD WHO WERE TO BE PRAYED  
FOR.

Very frequently, however, these curious sculptures were employed to enclose or to serve the purpose of what, in ecclesiastical language, were denominated the sacred diptychs; for under such an appellation it was usual to call those tablets,\* upon which it was the custom, commenced in the apostolic times, to inscribe, amongst other names, particularly those of such deceased members of the Church as had been benefactors to it, and for whom the priest and people never omitted to pray each time the holy sacrifice was offered. From the ancient Liturgies we gather that it was the office of the deacon to rehearse aloud this catalogue registered in the public diptychs,† to the people, and, at a certain part of the

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\* By the ancients, all those tablets which folded up into two leaves or pages, were called diptychs, or *tabellæ duplices*, whether they were employed in epistolary correspondence, for holding memoranda, or any other similar purpose. Ovid, in his lamentations over the letter which had been returned to him unopened, denominates the rejected epistle *tabellæ duplices*; and St. Augustin, three centuries later, referring to the two marble tables of the law, given to Moses, denominates them by the term *diptychium*; ‘In illo diptychio lapideo jam tu non corde lapideo intelligis, quid duro illi populo congruebat.’—*Lib. xv. contra Faustum, cap. 4.*

† Sometimes these lists of the dead for whom public prayer was made during the celebration of the liturgy,



service, to suggest to the priest the names of those amongst the dead for whom he was required to make more especial mention in his prayers.\* In evidence of this, the reader is here presented with extracts from the Liturgies which will serve not only to illustrate the subject under discussion, but to fortify the arguments adduced in a preceding chapter (Chap VII. on *Purgatory*, p.450) in support of the ancient and apostolic doctrine of prayer for the dead.

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were denominated ‘the sacred tables,’ as we learn from various passages in those ancient works which pass under the name of St. Dionysius the Areopagite. In describing what took place at mass, immediately after the ‘pax,’ or kiss of peace, that author observes:—‘When all present have reciprocally saluted one another, then is, made the mystic recitation of the sacred tablets;’—Καὶ ἀσπασαμένων ἀλλήλους ἀπάντων, ἡ μυστικὴ τῶν ιερῶν πτυχῶν ἀνάβρῃσις ἐπιτελεῖται.—*Eccles. Hierarch. cap. iii.*

\* This custom has ceased to be observed in the Roman liturgy for some centuries, though we find it indicated there by the *Oratio supra Diptycha*. At present, when the celebrating priest arrives at that part of the canon called the ‘Memento,’ he secretly commemorates those for whose souls he more particularly wishes to pray. That towards the commencement of the ninth century, the ancient custom of reading the names of the dead from the diptychs, according to the rubric in the sacramentary of St. Gregory the Great, (*Menard. p. 264*) was still kept up in England, and throughout the Latin Church, is attested by our countryman Alcuin, who says:—‘Post illa verba

FROM THE LITURGY OF ST. MARK. *Renaudot, tom i.*

*The deacon reads the Diptychs (or Catalogue) of the dead. The priest then bowing down, prays :*

‘ To the souls of all these, O Sovereign Lord our God, grant repose in thy holy tabernacles, in thy kingdom, bestowing on them the good things promised and prepared by thee, which eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard, and which have not entered into the heart of man. Give rest to their souls, and render them worthy of the kingdom of heaven. Grant to us such an end of life as will be worthy of Christians, pleasing to thee, and free from sin : and give us a share and lot with all thy saints.’ *p. 150.*

FROM THE LITURGY OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM,

*Goar, Eucholog. Græcorum.*

*The deacon incenses the altar and the diptychs or tablets, and mentions those of the dead and the living whom he may particularly choose. Here the priest makes particular mention of those*

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quibus dicitur in somno pacis—usus fuit antiquorum, sicut etiam hodie Romana agit Ecclesia : ut statim recitarentur a diptychis nomina defunctorum.’ The recitation of the diptychs by the deacon, in the celebration of mass according to the Greek and Oriental liturgies, is still kept up, as may be seen by consulting Goar, *Euchologium Græcorum*, p. 78, Renaudot, *Liturgiarum Orientalium Collectio*, and Le Brun, *passim*.

*for whom he intends to pray, both living and dead. For the living, he says:—*

‘For the safety, protection, and the remission of the sins of the servant of God, N.’

*For the dead he says:—*

‘For the repose, and the remission of the soul of thy servant N., in a place of light, from which grief and lamentation are far removed; and make him to rest, where he may see around him the light of thy countenance.’ *p. 78.*

FROM THE COPTIC LITURGY, USED BY THE  
EUTYCHIANS, CALLED THE LITURGY OF  
ST. BASIL.—Renaudot, *tom. i.*

*The deacons shall read the diptychs, and recite the names of the dead. The priest says, after the reading of the diptychs:—*

‘Command those, O Lord, whose souls thou hast received, to repose in this place, and preserve us, who are pilgrims here, in thy faith, and graciously grant us thy peace, to the end.’ *p. 18, 19.*

FROM THE ALEXANDRIAN LITURGY OF ST. BASIL,  
TAKEN FROM THE GRÆCO-ARABIC.

*The deacon reads the diptychs.*

*Priest.* ‘Be mindful also, O Lord, of all the sacerdotal order, who are now departed, and of those who were in a secular state. Grant that the souls of them all may rest in the bosoms of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Lead

them, and collect them together in a verdant pasture, on the waters of refreshment, in a paradise of pleasure.'

*After the diptychs, the priest says :*

'To those, O Lord, whose souls thou hast received, grant repose in that place, and vouchsafe to transfer them to the kingdom of heaven.' *pp. 72, 73.*

#### VII.—CALENDARS OF THE MARTYRS AND SAINTS.

Moreover, the names of those martyrs whose relics were possessed by that particular church, came to be inscribed in a particular catalogue : and those holy prelates whose habitual exercise of every Gospel virtue, whilst living, had acquired for them the reputation of heroic sanctity, and induced a well founded belief of their being admitted, by the gates of death, to the joys of heaven,—received, as a public testimony of religious reverence towards their memory, the honour of being enumerated after their decease in diptychs appropriated to that exclusive purpose. Such an inscription was equivalent to the present ceremony of canonization,\* and, like that public act of the

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\* Benedictus XIV. *De Beatificatione Sanctorum*, lib. i. c. vi. sec. 7. The term canonization is derived from that part of the mass called the Canon, in which are mentioned the names of the saints who are always commemorated in the holy sacrifice. On the day when the pope, after long, most scrutinizing, and satisfactory examination

Church, was a warrant for the faithful to regard the subject of it as a saint, and to invoke his intercession at the throne of mercy.

VIII.—THE NAME OF THE EMPEROR INSCRIBED IN THEM.

In process of time, the reigning emperor and his consort, as well as the Roman pontiff, and the bishop of that individual Church, the patriarchs and other dignified ecclesiastics, were enrolled upon these diptychs, that they might be severally commemorated in the public prayers. Such persons also as were in the habit of making offerings to the Church for the use of the altar, or the maintenance of its ministers, as well as all those who had been recently baptized, were likewise registered in the diptychs, that they might have their names announced aloud during divine service.\*

IX.—USED AS ALTAR-PIECES.

Nor were these the only purposes for which the Church employed the diptychs. It is a favourite

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into the extraordinary holiness of any servant of God, formally inscribes him among the saints, and thus proposes his conduct as an example of Christian imitation, he writes down the name at the end of those already enumerated in the canon, and invokes his intercession at the mass which he immediately offers up to God in honour of the saint.

\* Probably from this custom may be derived the use of baptismal registers.

opinion amongst ecclesiastical antiquaries,\* that during the latter persecutions inflicted on the Church by the Pagan emperors, a custom was introduced of painting the effigies of our divine Redeemer and of the saints upon them, since upon the slightest intimation of any one's approach, they could be folded up, and instantly secreted; and thus prevent the Gentile intruder from venting his fury, or pointing his derision, against the representation of Christ and of his servants.† When

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\* Buonarruoti, *Osservazioni sopra alcuni Frammenti di Vasi antichi di Vetro*, p. 259.—Costudano, *Dissertatio in antiquam sacram Tabulam*, apud Gori, tom. iii. p. 63.

† The reader is not hence to conclude that there were no paintings nor altar-pieces in the oratories of the ancient Christians, anterior to the epoch when these sacred diptychs commenced to be employed for such a purpose. That those halls and sepulchral chambers which had been dedicated to the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice and the general purposes of religious worship, in the catacombs at Rome and Naples, and in the solitary tombs of Egypt and Jerusalem, (*see Appendix iv. on the Catacombs*) were ornamented with pictures by the primitive faithful, is evident not only from those remnants of fresco-paintings in all these places just enumerated, that so unequivocally attest the fact, but also from the decree of the council of Eliberis which was noticed at p. 539, and from the graphic description that Prudentius has left us of the altar-piece frescoed in the chapel of St. Hippolytus in the Roman catacombs, which was presented to the reader at pp. 387, 388.

Christianity became the religion of the state, and the pastors of the Church were invested with the means of decorating the sanctuary with splendour; there began to be executed for its service diptychs of ivory and of other materials, wrought with appropriate devices.

To the scenes of Pagan manners and of Gentile fable succeeded the more becoming representations of the Scripture-history, and of the symbols of the Christian faith. The prophets, apostles, and more illustrious martyrs, were imaged on them; and the poetic encomium of the Pagan consul, was exchanged for an aspiration to some Christian saint, soliciting his intercession. But of the sainted servants of God, no one is so often introduced as the blessed Virgin Mary.

X.—THE MODERN ALTAR-PIECE DERIVED FROM THE  
DIPTYCHS.

Besides all these various kinds of diptychs hitherto enumerated, it is evident from the specimens of those which are still preserved in the museums of the curious, that there were others ornamented with the effigies of our blessed Redeemer and of the saints, and were employed by the Church for precisely the same purpose as our present painted altar-pieces, which seem to have succeeded to these ivory diptychs, or, to speak more accurately, to have derived their origin from them. The most satisfactory proofs of such an opinion may be ga-

thered amongst those ancient altar-pieces which are still permitted to hang in some of the old churches, or have been removed to ornament the various splendid picture galleries on the Continent. These ancient altar-pieces are composed not of two, but of three folds; and hence, are more accurately denominated triptychs. The centre pannel—and they are all on wood—is twice as large as the other two, which are attached to its sides by hinges, and close over like folding doors, so that when shut up after service, the interior paintings were not only quite concealed from the eye, but protected from dust and the effects of the weather; a circumstance to which many are indebted for their present high preservation and brilliant tones of colour. From the ancient, a gradual transition was made to the modern form of our present altar-pieces. At first these triptychs began to be always left open and expanded.\* Then they were

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\* The foreign traveller will immediately call to mind almost innumerable examples of these ancient altar-pieces. There is a superb collection of paintings on sacred subjects by the earliest German and Flemish masters, belonging to the king of Bavaria, and deposited, for the present, at the country palace of Schleissheim, until the new picture-gallery of Munich be ready to receive them. This valuable collection was made by the brothers Boisserée, who traversed Germany in all directions during the French invasion, and, at the suppression by Napoleon of all the monasteries, and the spoliation of the churches by



formed without any hinges, so that they could not be closed, but were all of one piece. They con-

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his generals, bought up such works of art as were not conveyed to the Louvre. Amongst these paintings are many altar-pieces in the form of the ancient diptychs; or rather, as the greater number have three instead of two folding leaves, should be denominated triptychs. The Boisserées have published this gallery in a series of well executed lithographs, entitled, *Die Sammlung Alt Nieder- und Ober-Deutscher Gemälde, der Brüder Boisserée und Bertram, lithographirt von T. N.*

Over a side-altar in the cathedral of Cologne, a splendid triptych altar-piece still hangs, to challenge and receive the admiration of the traveller as it unfolds its beauties to him. At Nuremberg, a city so interesting to every lover of the arts, the Lutheran churches of St. Sebald and St. Martin, as well as the handsome old Catholic church built in the florid pointed style, and dedicated to our blessed Lady, have their walls and side chapels ornamented with these ancient folding altar-pieces suspended there, many of them, more than three hundred years ago, representing the usual subject of the B. V. Mary with the infant Jesus in her lap, and two saints standing one on each side. The gallery at Bologna exhibits many similar altar-pieces, by Cimabue, Giotto, and other old Italian masters. Nor are specimens wanting in England: the earl of Shrewsbury, amongst the numerous paintings of his magnificent gallery at Alton Towers, possesses three triptychs; the first a beautiful one by John Van Eyck, which Goethe would have hailed as one of the happiest productions of his favourite; another of the old Florentine school; and the last in the old German style by Wolgemut.

tinned to retain, however, much of their former appearance, and exhibited various proofs of their ancient origin, for they were still distinguished into several niches, or rather pannels, each of which was crowned with its own triangular or circular frontispiece. The divisions were formed by columns, or other ornaments.\* About the year 1400, this taste was on the wane, and the style of altar-piece now in universal use, arose.†

As a summary of the foregoing paragraphs, we may conclude by observing that there were anciently two kinds of diptychs:—profane and sacred. The sacred diptychs comprehended two grand classes: one for the dead, the other for the living; each of which however was distinguished into particular subdivisions. The sacred diptychs for the dead, contained two catalogues: the first was a list of those for the repose of whose souls public prayer was offered up during the Liturgy of the Mass, throughout the Latin as well as the Greek and other Oriental Churches; the second contained a list of those holy prelates and other pious indi-

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\* Some of these altar-pieces, in the gallery at Bologna, have their pediments ornamented with the most elaborate tabernacle-work in the Italo-Gothic style.

† Up to almost the time of Raphael and Titian, the more general though not exclusive subject of the altar-piece, was our blessed Lady with the sacred infant sitting on a throne encircled by a crowd of saints. The same style prevailed and still continues amongst the Greeks.

viduals who lived and died conspicuous for sanctity, and whose names were rehearsed in the invocation addressed to them to employ their charitable intercession at the throne of mercy, in behalf of the faithful on earth. The sacred diptychs for the living, included the names of the reigning pontiff, of the patriarchs, and of those bishops who were actually presiding over the more distinguished Churches, as well as of emperors and princes. To insert a living prelate in this diptych, was equivalent to a declaration of holding communion with him. To erase his name from it, was tantamount to a sentence of excommunication or denouncement of his heterodoxy.

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### CHAPTER XVI.

#### ON ALTARS.

1. Use of Altars in the Old and New Testaments.—2. From the times of the Apostles to the present day.—3. Noticed in all the Liturgies.—4. Of what material, and of what form constructed.
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## PART THE SECOND.

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### CHAPTER XVI.

#### ON ALTARS.

By the regulations of the Church, it is ordained that the holy sacrifice of the mass be offered upon an altar which contains a stone consecrated by a bishop, enclosing the relics of some saint or martyr, and be covered with three linen cloths that have been blessed for that purpose, with an appropriate form of benediction.\* An elucidation of such an ordinance will form the subject of the present dissertation, in which an enquiry will be first of all instituted concerning the antiquity of the use of altars in the Church; the formula of consecrating them will be then noticed; and the various ways of ornamenting them will be indicated to the reader.

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\* The Church, now, as anciently, employs nothing in the service of religion without first dedicating it to the service of the Deity by prayer,—‘For every creature of God is sanctified by the word of God, and prayer.’—*St. Paul*, 1 *Tim. C. iv. V. 5.*

## I.—USE OF ALTARS IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

The use of altars for the purpose of religion, is coeval with the preservation of the human race by Noah; and from the times of the remotest antiquity, the greatest respect has been always exhibited for the place which had been more especially appropriated to the worship of the Supreme Being, as well as for the altar which was erected there.

That a particular ceremonial, accompanied by an especial form of prayer, has been invariably followed at their respective dedications, seems indubitable. Every one will immediately remember not only the solicitude with which Noah, on issuing from the ark, immediately hastened to erect an altar for sacrifice,\* but also the injunctions delivered by Almighty God to Jacob that he should make to him an altar at Beth-el.† Moses, too, was thus commanded by the Lord;—‘Seven days shalt thou expiate the altar and sanctify it, and it shall be most holy :’‡ and in the book of Numbers,§ we find enumerated the many splendid presents which were offered by the princes of Israel on the occasion of the solemn consecration of the tabernacle, in the dedication of the altar, when it was anointed.

The excellence and holiness with which the altar of the New Testament is invested, are asserted by

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\* *Gen. C. viii. V. 20.*

† *Gen. C. xxxv. V. 1.*

‡ *Exod. C. xxix. V. 37.*

§ *Numb. C. vii. V. 84, &c.*



St. Paul, who admonishes the Hebrews\* that ‘we (Christians) have an altar whereof they have no power to eat who serve the tabernacle.’ To claim our religious respect for the temple of God, and to assure us of the hallowed nature of the altar there, the same Apostle first of all contrasts the table of the Lord, upon which the Eucharistic sacrifice had been offered, with the table of devils or the altars upon which, meats had been presented in sacrifice to idols;† and after assuring the Corinthians that they could not be partakers of the table of the Lord, and of the table of devils, he thus interrogates them in a tone which announced a severe reprimand upon the slightest irreverence towards either altar, or temple;—‘What, have you not houses to eat and drink in? or despise ye the church of God?‡

II.—FROM THE TIMES OF THE APOSTLES TO THE  
PRESENT DAY.

If we interrogate the various monuments of antiquity, we shall discover that every where throughout the Christian world, from the apostolic era up to the present moment, the same idea has prevailed that the temples of the Christian faith, were erected for no other purpose than to offer up in them the sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus Christ;

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\* *Heb. C. xiii. V. 10.*      † *1 Cor. C. x. V. 19, &c.*

‡ *1 Cor. C. xi. V. 22.*

and that the table on which this offering was made, became a true, a hallowed altar, while the spot on which it stood was regarded as a consecrated sanctuary, impermeable to the laic's footstep,—the holy of holies of the New Testament, sacred from the tread of any other, save the priest of God and his lawfully appointed ministers.

Commencing with the Epistles of St. Ignatius, who—venerable for his years, many of which he passed in the apostles' society,\*—suffered martyrdom in 107, and continuing our researches up to the period of the 19th century, we shall discover, in the works of ecclesiastical writers, and in the customs and rituals of all the Churches, the most splendid proofs of such a doctrine. The *θυσιαστήριον* of the Greeks and Orientals, and the *altare* of the Latin fathers, are terms that most unequivocally signify a place where sacrifice is offered; in other words, an altar.†

\* St. Ignatius was instructed by St. Peter and St. John; he became bishop of Antioch, A.D. 67; and suffered martyrdom, being torn to pieces by wild beasts in the Colosseum, under Trajan.

† The term altar may be derived from the two Latin words, *altus*, 'high,' and *ara*, 'table for sacrifice;' whence *alta-ara*, or altar. Amongst the Greeks, any altar was denominated *θυσιαστήριον*, from the verb *θυειν*, 'to sacrifice;' and in the Old Testament it is called *זֶבֶח* from the verb *זָבַח* 'to slay,' 'to kill,' or 'to sacrifice.' The table for the

To strengthen his exhortations to the Philadelphians, concerning their unity of faith, their harmony of preaching, and their participation of the same Eucharist, the apostolic father St. Ignatius alleges this reason :—‘ The flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ is one, and his blood is one, which was poured out for us ; one bread is broken for all, and one chalice is distributed to all : in every church there is but one altar, and one bishop, with the company of elders and deacons my fellow-servants.’\*

The writers of the second century, St. Justin Martyr, Theophilus, and St. Irenæus, contribute, not indeed a direct, but only a collateral evidence on this point. If they do not expressly use the word altar, the terms, however, under which they designate the holy Eucharist, sufficiently imply, that had it been their object to mention the sacred table on which the blessed sacrament was cele-

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shew-bread, on which nothing was offered in sacrifice, was not designated by this, but by another appellation.

† Μία γάρ ἐστιν ἡ σὰρξ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησού, καὶ ἐν αὐτοῦ το αἷμα το ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἐκχυθέν· ἓς καὶ ἄρτος τοῖς πᾶσιν ἐθρύφθη, καὶ ἐν ποτήριον τοῖς ὅλοις διανεμήθη, ἐν θυσιαστήριον πάση τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, καὶ ἓς ἐπίσκοπος ἅμα τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ, καὶ τοῖς διακόνοις τοῖς συνδουλῶς μου. *S. Ignatius, in Epist. ad Philadelphenses.* The Protestant writer Mede acknowledges, that for the first two ages of the Church, the table upon which the Eucharist was consecrated, was called by no other name than altar.—*Disc. of Altars, p.* 386.

brated, they would have called it an altar, as they invariably denominate the Eucharist itself a sacrifice and oblation. St. Justin Martyr, in his dialogue with the Jew Tryphon, designates the Eucharist, a sacrifice ; and observes that it was of this sacrifice of the Christians, which is offered up in every place, that Malachias had prophesied.\* Of the Eucharistic sacrifice it is observed by St. Irenæus, that the ‘ oblation of the Church, which the Lord commanded to be offered up throughout the world, is considered as a pure sacrifice before God.† In his book on prayer, Tertullian combats the scruples which began to possess a number of persons who imagined that on fasting-days it was better not to be present at the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice, lest, by participating of the body and blood of Christ, (for the custom of those times was, that each one who assisted at mass, should also receive the blessed sacrament), they should thus violate the precept of fasting. He asks such persons, if the participation of the Eucharist, instead of superinducing a breach of duty towards

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\* Διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος τούτου θυσίας ὡς παρέδωκεν Ἰησοῦς ὁ Χριστός γίνεσθαι, τουτέστιν ἐπὶ τῇ εὐχαριστίᾳ τοῦ ἔργου καὶ τοῦ ποτηρίου, τας ἐν παντὶ τοκῇ τῆς γῆς γινομένας ὑπὸ τῶν Χριστιανῶν, προλαθῶν ὁ Θεὸς μαρτυρεῖ εὐαρέστους ὑπάρχειν αὐτῷ.—Justinus M. *Dial. cum Tryph.*

† Igitur Ecclesiæ oblatio quam Dominus docuit offerre in universo mundo, purum sacrificium reputatum est apud Deum.—*Adv. Hæres. C. xxxiv.*

God, will not rather draw the communicant closer to him? 'Will not,' he goes on to observe, 'will not your fasting be more solemn, if you stand before the altar of God? By receiving the body of the Lord, and reserving it, both duties will be fulfilled; the participation of the sacrifice, and the discharge of your obligation.'\*

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\* 'Similiter et stationum diebus non putant plerique sacrificiorum orationibus interveniendum, quod statio solvenda sit accepto corpore Domini. Ergo devotum Deo obsequium Eucharistia resolvit, an magis Deo obligat? Nonne solemnior erit statio tua, si et ad Aram Dei steteris? Accepto corpore Domini et reservato, utrumque salvum est, et participatio sacrificii et executio officii.' To understand the meaning of this passage, it will be necessary to remember, first, that the ancient Christians, by the term *statio* or station, designated their days of fasting, which, on some occasions, they rigorously observed without tasting a morsel of food until sunset; and on others less solemn, until the first half had transpired of the time which elapses between mid-day and the closing-in of the evening. The term *station* was applied to indicate, amongst other things, fasting-days, because it was upon them, that the faithful dedicated a greater portion of their time to prayer, which they offered up standing, and with their hands elevated, and outstretched, as is exemplified in the figures which are given at pp. 624, 626, and 631, chap. xii. on Vestments. 2dly, in the first ages of the Church, the blessed Eucharist under one kind—that of bread—used to be given to the laity, that they might convey it home with them, and communicate in private. For this purpose, they had little vessels called *arcule*, two of which were exhibited to the

In the same century, Origen and St. Cyprian perpetually refer to the altar of the Christian Church.\*

A crowd of writers present themselves as witnesses for the fourth century. The historian Eusebius, in describing the magnificent church erected in the city of Tyre by its bishop Paulinus, particularly notices the altar which stood in the middle of the holy of holies, or the sanctuary.† St. Optatus Milevitanus thus exclaims;—‘What is so sacrilegious as to break down—to erase—to remove God’s altars upon which you yourselves have once sacrificed?...What is the altar but the seat of the body and the blood of Christ?’‡ It was thus that St. Ambrose exultingly observes of the martyrs SS. Gervasius and Protasius, whose

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reader at p. 273, Vol. I. in which they received and carried away from the altar the Eucharistic species. (See p. 278.) To tranquillize the scrupulous, Tertullian advises that they assist at Mass, and reserve the body of the Lord, which they must receive along with the rest of the faithful, and, carrying it home, participate of it at the conclusion of the vigil, before they take their usual refectio.

\* Orig. *Hom.* iii.—S. Cypriani, *Epist. passim*.

† ‘Ἐφ’ ἁπασι τε το τῶν ἁγίων θυσιαστηρίων, ἐν μέσῳ θείας.—Euseb. *Hist. Ecc. lib.* x. c. 4.

‡ Quid est tam sacrilegum quam altaria Dei (in quibus et vos aliquando obtulistis) frangere, radere, removere?... Quid est altare, nisi sedes et corporis et sanguinis Christi?—*Lib.* iv. *contra Parmen.*

relics he had recently translated to his new church ; — ‘ Let those triumphant sufferers succeed to the place where Christ is the victim. But He who suffered for all men, is upon the altar ; they who have been redeemed by his passion are under the altar.’\* In his reply to Vigilantius, St. Jerom asks the innovator, ‘ if he considered that the Roman pontiff acted wrong, when he offered up sacrifice to God over the bones of the deceased Peter, and deceased Paul, which true believers regarded as venerable, but Vigilantius contemned as vile dust ; or when he looked upon the martyrs’ tombs as the altars of Christ ? † Passages illustrative of this point, from the writings of St. Paulinus of Nola, and of the poet Prudentius, have already been noticed in the preceding pages ; ‡ and from a multitude of other authorities, we will select two only ; — St. John Chrysostom, and St. Augustin. The eloquent bishop of Constantinople observes that — ‘ The altar which we now use, is admirable on account of the victim which is deposited upon it....

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\* Succeedant victimæ triumphales in locum, ubi Christus hostia est ; sed ille super Altare, qui pro omnibus passus est : isti sub altari, qui illius redempti sunt passione.

† Male facit ergo Romanus Episcopus, qui super mortuorum hominum Petri et Pauli secundum nos ossa veneranda, secundum te vilem pulvisculum, offert Domino sacrificia, et tumulos eorum Christi arbitratur Altaria. — Hierony. *lib. contra Vigilant.*

‡ See the whole of Num. VIII. commencing at p. 386.

This wonderful altar, by its nature, is indeed of stone, but it becomes holy after it receives the body of Christ.' 'Thou holdest,' continues St. Chrysostom, 'the altar in veneration, because it sustains Christ's body.'\* 'Who,' enquires St. Augustin, 'who amongst the faithful ever heard a priest, standing at the altar, though it was erected to the honour and worship of God, over the holy body of a martyr, say in the prayers;—I offer sacrifice to thee Peter, or to thee Paul?† Though

\* Τοῦτο θυσιαστηριον μὲν γὰρ θυμαστὸν διὰ τὴν ἐπιθεμενὴν ἐν αὐτῷ θυσίαν....θυμαστὸν τοῦτο παλιν, λίθος μὲν ἐστὶ τὴν φύσιν, ἅγιον δὲ γίνεται, ἐπειδὴ σῶμα δέχεται Χριστοῦ.—S. Chrys. *Hom. xx. in 2 Corinth. viii.*

† Quis audivit aliquando fidelium stantem sacerdotem ad Altare etiam super sanctum corpus martyris ad Dei honorem cultumque constructum, dicere in precibus : Offero tibi sacrificium Petre vel Paule.—*Lib. viii. de Civ. Dei, cap. ult.* It should be observed, first, that with one or two solitary exceptions, the Greek Fathers invariably employ the word *θυσιαστηριον* to indicate the altar of the Christian temple, upon which the holy and unbloody sacrifice of the Mass is offered, while they as invariably apply the term *βωμος* to signify the altars of Paganism. Amongst the Latin Fathers, 'Altare,' is more generally, though not exclusively used, since 'Ara' may be very often met with. Secondly, if some of the earliest Christian writers assured the Pagans that they had no altars nor temples, we should bear in mind the motives which prompted them to produce their apologies for Christianity, and the object which they had in view while discussing



nothing could be easier, it is unnecessary to accumulate additional authorities from the writings of the holy Fathers, and other pious men, to demonstrate the use of altars in the Church from the times of the Apostles up to the present epoch, especially as this truth will stand out so conspicuously to view, after the extracts about to be made from the various liturgies.

### III.—NOTICED IN ALL THE LITURGIES.

If we appeal to the several liturgies in use throughout the universal Church, we shall ascertain them to be equally concordant with the early Fathers in asserting the existence, and in showing the necessity of an altar, according to the first and general acceptation of the term, for all the purposes of a true and proper sacrifice peculiar to the Christian dispensation. With regard to the liturgy in

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the question of religious worship with idolaters. They replied to the objection, in the sense in which it was propounded; and studied to adopt their language to the intelligence of Gentiles, who regarded an altar as a place where living animals were slaughtered, where bloody victims were sacrificed, and fruits and other productions of the earth were immolated. In such a sense, the defenders of the Christian faith,—the antagonists of Gentilism, and expositors of its inanities, could, as they did, assert with truth that they had no altars: but for the mystical sacrifice of the Eucharist, they maintained that they had an altar.

use throughout the Latin Church, the correctness of this assertion is so conspicuous, and such obvious proofs present themselves in every page of the Roman missal,\* that it is unnecessary to detain the reader in discussing this branch of the question. We will proceed, at once, to the Oriental liturgies. The one which passes under the denomination of St. James's, is remarkable for its antiquity.† In this liturgy, the priest is frequently instructed to speak of the holy, the divine altar, and the sacrifice which he is going to offer up upon it.

It would be impossible to select clearer or more splendid terms to insist upon the obligation of erecting an altar for the purpose of sacrifice, than those employed in their respective liturgies by the Oriental Christians in general, whether Greeks,‡ Copts,§ Syrians, Jacobites, and Maronites,|| Nestorians,¶ or Armenians.\*\* Of this the reader may immediately satisfy himself by a perusal of the short extracts from several of the above-mentioned liturgies, which he will find noticed at the end of this volume.††

\* See pp. 4, 8, 9, 44, of the *Liturgy of the Mass*, Vol. i.

† Le Brun, tom. iv. p. 349, &c.

‡ Goar, *Euchologium Græcorum*, pp. 615, 618, 835, &c.

§ Renaudot, tom. ii. p. 500.

|| Ibid. p. 1.

¶ Le Brun, t. vi. pp. 472, 482, &c.    \*\* Ib. pp. 86, 92.

†† See Appendix I.

IV.—OF WHAT MATERIAL, AND IN WHAT FORM  
CONSTRUCTED.

That for the first three centuries, the altar was more generally, though not always, of wood, is evident from a variety of testimonies. Tradition has handed down the altar, in the form of a wooden table, upon which St. Peter, as it is said, was accustomed to offer up the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Mass, in the house of the patrician Pudens, at Rome, where it is still preserved with much respect in the church of St. Prudentiana. St. Athanasius, in describing the sacrileges perpetrated by the Arians, enumerates amongst other articles of church-furniture which they had burned, the sacred table, which was of wood.\* St. Optatus Milevitanus,† and St. Augustin,‡ also notice the destruction of the altars (of wood) committed by the enemies of religion. From the earliest times, however, it is certain that it was customary to celebrate Mass in the catacombs upon the tombs of the apostles,§ and martyrs,|| not only at Rome, but in every other portion of the Church of Christ. The slab of marble which covered the sepulchre, was made to serve as the altar-table, and the low-browed arched recess that spanned it, merely left

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\* Athan. *Epist. ad solit. vitam agentes.*

† *Lib. vi. contra Parmen.*

‡ *Epist. l. ad Bonif.*

§ See the passage of St. Jerom at *p. 715.*

|| See what has been said at *p. 386.*

sufficient space for the priest to perform the sacred Eucharistic mysteries.\* When the altar, as occasionally happened, was not the tomb of a martyr, it was sometimes of an oblong cubic figure,† at others, it resembled a quadrangular table supported in the centre by a single column, or upheld at its extremities by two, or at its angles by four low columns.‡ For almost fourteen centuries, it has

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\* The form of some of these altars may be seen in the engraving given as the frontispiece to this volume.

† Boldetti, *p.* 35, and at *p.* 186.

‡ Bona, *Rerum Liturg. lib.* i. c. 20. Let us hope that in future whenever a chapel is to be erected, those who have the superintendence of its construction will possess the good taste, and summon up the resolution to insist that the architect not only selects his model from among the most admired and purest specimens of the art, whether the fabric is determined to be in the Grecian, or in the English pointed style; but that he designs its ornaments and appurtenances so as they contain, as much as may be, an obviously religious meaning, and signify, at once, the specific purpose for which the edifice is raised. The sacred vessels of the altar, the instruments of the passion of our Lord, and the numerous utensils employed in solemn public worship, will furnish equally graceful, and far more fitting, prototypes for the ornaments in the frieze of a Corinthian, or the metope of a Doric Christian church, than the ox-sculls, the wreaths, and flowers, and scrolls, imitated from the entablatures of Gentile temples; and which, not unfrequently, are Pagan hieroglyphics, involving mythological, or superstitious meanings. What

been a universal custom to have that part of the altar on which the Eucharist is consecrated, of stone, or marble.

V.—THE ALTAR ISOLATED IN ANCIENT CHURCHES.

When peace was given to the faithful, and Constantine erected to the worship of the true God, those sumptuous piles in different parts of Rome, which still attest his piety, the ancient custom was, as far as possible, preserved, and the altar

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more elegant, and at the same time more appropriate than an altar constructed of a slab of marble, supported at its corners by the figures of angels, and just resting on the lid of a sarcophagus or mortuary chest underneath it. Many churches at Rome, Moorfields-chapel, London, and the sanctuary in the frontispiece to Vol. I. of this work, afford examples of such a model. This construction of altar not only presents the sculptor with the happiest opportunities of exhibiting the human form elevated to the ideal beauty of the seraphim, under the most graceful and expressive aspects, in the figures of the angels lowly bending down, or kneeling in act of adoration while they uphold the sacred table; but it is, in reference to ecclesiastical antiquity, so correct by recalling to our remembrance the fact that during the earliest ages of the Church, the holy sacrifice was, in general, offered up upon the tombs of the apostles and the martyrs. Our old English, and once Catholic cathedrals contain, amongst the beautiful and elaborate tombs that adorn them, innumerable examples for altars to be constructed in the Gothic style.

was placed immediately over the tomb of the apostle, or martyr, in whose memory the basilica itself was dedicated to the Deity.

The tombs of the apostles and more distinguished martyrs who were buried in the catacombs, immediately after their heroic death, were employed as altars ; and became objects of particular veneration with both pastors and people, who converted their sepulchral chambers into little churches, and ornamented them, as far as their own resources and the pressure of those grievous times of persecution would allow. But as soon as the exercise of Christianity was tolerated in public, these subterranean oratories were much too small ; and it became necessary to construct edifices of sufficient capaciousness to contain the multitudes of those who, every day, professed themselves believers in the Gospel. The faithful were, however, unwilling to remove the bodies of the saints from the catacombs, if possible. They wished, and it was natural, to celebrate the holy mysteries on that same spot which was hallowed by the relics of an apostle, or a glorious champion of their once persecuted, but now triumphant faith—in that place rendered venerable in their eyes by having been so oftentimes frequented by crowds of saintly men and women, who ultimately suffered martyrdom, and were deposited around—in fine, peopled by a world of religious recollections. They consequently had recourse to this expedient of erecting

churches, in and about Rome, immediately over those places in the catacombs in which these venerable oratories stood; and contrived that the altar should be placed immediately above the tomb of the apostle, or martyr, in whose memory the superincumbent basilica was dedicated to the Almighty God. Hence it was, that the altar not only stood in an isolated position, but assumed somewhat the appearance of a diminutive monopteral temple. The plain and humbly ornamented primitive altar on the tomb itself, was not defrauded of any portion of its ancient honours. It was still kept up, and the cemeterial oratory continued to be, as much as ever, frequented. To facilitate this, not only a communication, by a flight of steps, was opened between the vast and sumptuous basilica, and little modest subterranean chapel; but a deep space was thrown open in front of it, sufficient to present a view of the tomb to the veneration of those above. This sunken space was denominated the *Confession*, because here reposed the remains of one who had not merely spilt his blood, but generously laid down his life itself as a martyr—a witness to the truth—a confessor of the faith of Jesus. Hence, a little later, arose the custom of denominating by the term ‘confession,’ every similar open space in those churches that were not built over an altar in the catacombs, but whither the body of some martyr had been translated and deposited. This method of erecting a sumptuous church over an

oratory in the catacombs, and converting the martyr's sepulchre into a confession, we see exemplified in many churches at Rome, but particularly at St. Laurence's *fuori delle mura*, and St. Peter's, where the hollow space at the foot of the high altar, with its hundred golden lamps that burn night and day, is celebrated through the world as the confession of St. Peter, and around which individuals from almost every nation of the earth, may be frequently observed kneeling to adore their only Saviour Jesus, and to entreat his favourite servant—the Prince of the Apostles—to befriend them with a charitable prayer.\*

#### VI.—PLACED TO LOOK TOWARDS THE EAST.

From the period that the Christians were emancipated from the necessity of building their altars in caves and the gloomy windings of the catacombs, or in some retired and solitary corner above ground, to which they might resort with the least probability of attracting the notice of the Gentile and the persecutor;† and when they enjoyed the

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\* The forms of these altars and confessions in the ancient churches at Rome, may be seen in a very interesting, but as yet unfinished work, entitled—*Monumenti della Religione Christiana ossia Raccolta delle antiche Chiese, o Basiliche Christiane di Roma, dal quarto, sino al decimo terzo secolo*; and in D'Agincourt, *tom. ii. p. 92, tom. v. p. 32, plate xiii. num. 13, &c.*

† The writer is well aware that, from the commencement



liberty, and were in possession of the means to indulge their own ideas and wishes both in the arrangement and disposition of their churches, there are two characteristic features which may be almost invariably discovered in their religious edifices:—the erection of the sacred pile so as to run due east and west; and the position of the altar arranged in such a way that it looked directly towards the east. This we observe not only in a great many ancient churches still existing in Rome and elsewhere, but we find it noticed in the earliest, as well as more recent ecclesiastical writers; Tertulian;\* the author of the book of Apostolical Constitutions;† Eusebius;‡ Isidorus;§ and Walafrid

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of Christianity, its professors had places of assembly dedicated to the especial and exclusive purposes of common worship. Ciampini, Mede, and Cave, have ably demonstrated this fact. The position of those churches, however, and the situation of their altars were, it is presumed, in most instances, not so much the result of choice, as of necessity.

\* Likening the church to the residence of the Dove—the Holy Ghost—this writer says;—‘*Amat figura Spiritus Sancti Orientem.*’—*Advers. Valent. c. iii.* And in another place he observes;—‘*Inde suspicio quod innotuerit nos in Orientis regionem precari.*’—*Apol. c. xvi.*

† In the Apostolical Constitutions it is prescribed that the churches be built in resemblance of a ship’s hull, and turned towards the east.—*Lib. ii. c. 61.*

‡ The historian tells us that the church built by Paulinus at Tyre, looked towards the rising sun.

§ ‘*Antiqui, quando templa construebant, Orientem*

Strabo,\* have severally spoken of this ancient custom.

Such a practice was not adopted without having attached to it a spiritual meaning. It was presumed that while the corporal eye was turned towards the east—the land where Eden's garden stood—and exiled man regretted the occasion of his banishment, the spiritual eye—the soul—would lift her gaze towards heaven, the real paradise,—her own, her native home.† Nor was it forgotten that the prophets of the Old Law delighted to designate the Messiah by the figurative appellation of the Orient, or day-spring,‡ that sun of justice which was to arise with health in his wings;§ and that the Evangelists and Apostles of the New Testament, employ with equal complacency the same beautiful language in signification of our divine Redeemer as they exultingly exclaim that the Orient from on high has visited us;|| or liken his doctrines to the dawn of morning—to the day-star which arises in the heart.¶

It is probable that, ere this, a difficulty will have presented itself to the mind of the reader, who finds himself unable to reconcile with one another, two such seemingly conflicting ideas as

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spectabant æquinoctialem ut qui deprecaretur, rectum aspiceret Orientem.'—Origines, c. iv.

\* *Cap. iv.* † *St. Basilus, lib. de Spiritu Sanc. c. xxvii.*

‡ *Zachar. C. iii. V. 8.* § *Malach. C. iv. V. 2.*

|| *St. Luke, C. i. V. 78.* ¶ *2 St. Peter, C. i. V. 19.*

those which present themselves under the supposition that not only the entrance and whole length of the church formerly presented themselves to the east, but that the altar also looked directly towards the same quarter. It should, however, be remarked, that anciently the altar did not lean, as at present, against the wall of the sanctuary, but stood out isolated, and was so arranged that the priest or pontiff who offered up the unbloody sacrifice upon it, should turn his face, and not as now his back, towards the people; hence both the altar, and the portals of the church were directed towards the east. This we see exemplified in what are called the papal altars in the old basilical churches at Rome, but particularly in St. Peter's, where the sovereign pontiff still invariably celebrates mass on festivals, at the great altar which looks towards the people, and consequently towards the portals of the church which open on the east.

#### VII.—THE DEDICATION OF ALTARS.

Judging from the piety of the primitive Christians, who never performed any action without hallowing it by prayer, or some religious ceremony,\* it is more than probable that, from the Apostolic times, no altar was ever used for offering up the holy sacrifice of the Mass, without having been previously consecrated by a solemn rite pe-

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\* See *p.* 505.

cular to that holy purpose; and it is no ill-founded presumption to suppose, that the pastors of the Church, in the dedication of their temples and altars, copied the example of the saints of old, who were directed by heaven itself to consecrate the altar, and to dedicate the temple erected to the Deity, by a particular and splendid ceremonial.\* We have the most authentic documents to prove the use of such a rite at the commencement of the fourth century. The ceremony of dedication which must have been performed in privacy during the times of persecution, began to be celebrated with much public magnificence during the tranquil reign of Constantine. It was then a gratifying spectacle, as the ecclesiastical historian Eusebius informs us, ‘to witness how the ceremony of consecration and dedication of the recently erected churches was solemnized in every city.† After describing the dedication of the church of Jerusalem, the same writer informs us that it concluded by the mystical service or offering of the unbloody sacrifice to God.‡ St. Gregory Nyssenus who was born in 330, observes;—‘This holy altar at which we assist, is constructed of stone, which, by nature, is common, and nothing different from other flags of stone with which the walls of our houses are encrusted, and our pavements are or-

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\* See p. 708. † Euseb. *de Laud. Constant.* c. xvii.

‡ Euseb. *de Vit. Constant.* lib. iv. c. 45.

namented. But because it is consecrated and dedicated to the worship of God, and has received a benediction, it is a holy table, an immaculate altar, which is no longer to be touched by all, but by priests only, and even by them with veneration.\*

St. Ambrose† has left us a prayer which he employed in the dedication of the churches and altars which he erected. ‘O Lord!’ devoutly prayed the holy bishop of Milan, ‘O Lord! I now beseech thee to look down as daily high-priest upon this thy house; upon these altars which are this day dedicated; upon these spiritual stones, in each one of which a sensible temple is consecrated unto thee; and in thy divine mercy receive thy servants’ prayers, that are poured out to thee in this place. Let every sacrifice which is offered up in this temple, with an entire and pious sedulousness, be unto thee as an odour of sanctification.’‡

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\* Ἐπει δὲ τὸ θυσιαστήριον τοῦτο τὸ ἅγιον, ᾧ παρέστηκαμεν, λίθος ἔστι κατὰ τὴν φύσιν κοινός, οὐδεν διαφέρων τῶν ἀλλῶν πλακῶν αἰ τοὺς τοίχους ἡμῶν οἰκοδομοῦσι καὶ καλλωπίζουσι τα ἐδαφῇ. Ἐπειδὴ δὲ καθιερωθῇ τῇ τῶν θεῶν θεραπεία, καὶ τὴν εὐλογίαν ἐδεῖται, ἔστι τράπεζα ἁγία, θυσιαστήριον ἀχραιτον, οὐχετι παρὰ πάντων ψηλαφώμενον, ἀλλὰ μόνον τῶν ἱερέων καὶ τούτων εὐλαβουμένων.—*In Baptismum Christi*, t. iii. p. 369.

† A. D. 374.

‡ Te nunc Domine precor, ut supra hanc domum tuam, supra hæc altaria, quæ hodie dedicantur, supra hos lapides spirituales, quibus sensibile tibi in singulis templum se-cratur, quotidianus præsul intendas, orationesque servorum

## VIII.—THE ALTAR ANOINTED.

Not only did the Church bear in mind the divine command issued to Moses, of celebrating the dedication of the altar, but she also remembered that the holy table was more particularly consecrated to the purposes of religious worship, by being anointed with rich and precious unguents. In the book of Genesis,\* we read that the patriarch Jacob, awaking out of his sleep, exclaimed concerning the spot on which he had been taking his repose : — ‘ How terrible is this place ! This is no other but the house of God, and the gate of heaven. And Jacob arising in the morning, took the stone which he had laid under his head, and he set it up for a title, pouring oil upon the top of it.’ Moses was thus directed by Almighty God :—Thou shalt make the holy oil of unction, an ointment compounded after the art of the perfumer.† And

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tuorum, quæ in hoc loco funduntur, divina tua suscipias misericordia. Fiat tibi in odorem sanctificationis omne sacrificium, quod in hoc templo fide integra, pia sedulitate defertur.

\* C. xxviii. V. 16, &c.

† The ingredients of the unction are thus enumerated by Moses :— ‘ Take spices, of principal and chosen myrrh five hundred sicles, and of cinnamon half so much, that is two hundred and fifty sicles ; of calamus in like manner two hundred and fifty. And of cassia five hundred sicles by the weight of the sanctuary, of oil of olives the measure hin.—*Exod. C. xxx. V. 23-24.*

therewith thou shalt anoint the tabernacle of the testimony, and the ark of the testament. And the table with the vessels thereof, and the candlestick and furniture thereof, and the altars of incense. And thou shalt sanctify all, and they shall be most holy ;\* a command which the Jewish lawgiver carefully complied with, as we find in the book of Numbers, where it is recorded, that ‘ in the day that Moses had finished the tabernacle, and set it up, and had anointed and sanctified it, with all its vessels, the altar likewise and all the vessels thereof.† The Church conceived that the anointing of her altars was an emblematical ceremony which she could appropriately borrow from the old law.

At what precise period the Church adopted the ceremony of anointing the altar at its consecration, is uncertain. We have, however, testimonies of a date that avouch its use at an early period : but this is certain, that towards the commencement of the sixth century, it became an ordinance enacted by more than one Council. The author of the works which pass under the name of St. Dionysius the Areopagite, not only observes, in a general manner, that, in his time, according to a universal rule, and (as it would appear from his manner of speaking) one a long time established, a holy ointment was used at the consecration of every sacred

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\* *Exod. C. xxx. V. 25. &c.*

† *C. vii. V. 1.*

thing;† but specifically notices, with strong emphasis, that it was a law of the most sacred mysteries, that the consecration of the holy altar should be completed by pouring out upon it the hallowed ointment.‡ The Council of Aidge§ decreed that altars should be consecrated not only by the unction of chrism, but also by a sacerdotal benediction;|| and, a very few years after, the Council of Epone ordained that no altars, excepting such as were made of stone, should be consecrated with the infusion of chrism upon them.¶

IX.—SAINTS' RELICS ENCLOSED IN THE ALTAR-STONE.

Whenever an altar is consecrated, some small portion at least of saints' relics, is invariably en-

† Τῷ θεῷ μυστὴρ χρῆται πρὸς παντὸς ἱεροῦ τελεσιουργίαν.—*Hierarch. Eccl. C. iii.* The Church still retains this ancient practice; for not only the altar-stone, but the chalice and paten are blessed and anointed by the bishop before they can be employed in the Eucharistic sacrifice.

‡ Καὶ τοῦτο δὲ ἱεραρχικῶς ἐννόησον, ὅτι καὶ τοῦ θεοῦ θνῆσαστηρίου τῇν ἱεραν τελείωσιν, ἢ τῶν ἀγιοτάτων τελεῶν θεσμοθεσία, ταῖς τοῦ ἱερωτάτου μύρου τελετουργεῖ παναγεσιν ἐπιχύσεις.—*Hierarch. Eccl. C. iii.*

§ A.D. 506.

|| Altaria placuit non solum unctione chrismatis, sed etiam sacerdotali benedictione sacrari.—*Con. Agathen. can. xiv. apud Labbeum, t. iv. p. 1385.*

¶ Altaria nisi lapidea, infusione chrismatis non sacrentur.—*Con. Epon. can. xxvi. apud Labbeum, t. iv. p. 1579.*



closed in it. This universal and established usage has descended from a venerable antiquity. From the earliest periods of the Church, it was usual to employ the tomb of a martyr for the purposes of the altar. Not only did this custom call to the remembrance of the faithful, the brethren whose souls are described by St. John as reposing under the mystic altar of heaven;\* but it furnished them with an admonition of their duty of laying down their lives like the martyrs, if required, in the profession of the faith of him who was crucified for their redemption. It would be superfluous to rehearse the observations we have made in a former chapter in illustration of this ancient practice.†

#### X.—THE ALTAR COVERED WITH LINEN CLOTHS.

Anciently, as now, the table of the altar was overspread with linen cloths. St. Optatus Milevitanus.‡ notices this practice as everywhere observed in his time. ‘Who,’ demands that writer, —‘who amongst the faithful is ignorant that when

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\* *Apoc. C. vi. V. 9.*

† For these proofs the reader is referred to p. 381, *et seq.* It is on account of this custom that the priest, on having ascended the steps leading to the altar, kisses that part of it which encloses the relics, at the same time that he recites the prayer which may be seen at p. 9.

‡ A.D. 370.

the holy mysteries are offering up, the boards of the altar are covered over with a linen cloth? During the sacred rites this veil could be touched, but not the wood.\* According to the rubrics of St. Gelasius's sacramentary, not only the altar, but the linen cloths are directed to be blessed and consecrated, as they are to serve for enfolding the body and the blood of Jesus Christ;—'Deign O Lord,' says the prayer, 'to sanctify, bless, and consecrate these linen cloths for the use of thy altar, to cover and envelope the body and blood of thy son our Lord Jesus Christ.' In the Pontifical of Egbert, who was Archbishop of York in 732, are contained the same prayers.† The ancient Liturgies once used in Gaul, and Spain, and at Milan,

\* Quis fidelium nescit in peragendis mysteriis ipsa ligna linteamine cooperiri? Inter ipsa sacramenta velamen potuit tangi, non lignum.—*Lib. v. adv. Parmen.*

† Sanctificare, benedicere, consecrareque digneris hæc linteamina in usum altaris tui ad tegendum involvendumque corpus et sanguinem Filii tui Domini nostri Jesu Christi: qui tecum vivit et regnat Deus.—*Codices Sacra. Rom. Eccles. Cura et Studio Joseph Mariæ Thomasii, p. 121.*

‡ A missal which contains the additional prayers and rubrics for a bishop, when he celebrates mass.

\* Martene, in his work *De Antiquis Ecclesiæ Ritibus*, mentions a beautiful manuscript copy of Egbert's *Pontifical*, written in Saxon characters, about the year 950.

which still retains the Ambrosian rite, also contain formulas the same in substance, and almost similar in expression.\* A distinction is to be observed between the two species of linen cloths employed for covering the altar. It is now more than a thousand years that a custom has universally prevailed throughout the Latin Church, of having the altar, at all times, overspread with a linen napkin. Over this is laid, at the celebration of the liturgy, a second species of altar-cloth, called the corporal, and is used for such a purpose, not only in the Western, but throughout the Greek, and all the Oriental Churches. The corporal, in the Latin Church, continued for many ages of such dimensions, that it completely covered the whole surface of the altar-table ; but the gradual curtailments through which it passed, reduced it to its present diminutive form, merely sufficient to cover the spot more immediately before the priest, upon which he consecrates the Eucharist. The Greeks also have more than one linen pall upon their altars. The first covering has, at its four corners, pieces of linen or silk embroidered or painted with the names of the four evangelists.

The second is denominated the flesh-cloth : because, as one of their writers remarks, since the altar may be likened, at the same time, to the sepulchre, and to the throne of Jesus ; so the linen

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\* Le Brun, *Cérémonies de la Messe*, t. vi. p. 583, &c.

cloths which cover it, are considered to represent both the shroud that enveloped his blessed body, and the mantle of his glory.\* As a third covering, is spread out a long towel corresponding to the corporal† of the Latin Church, called *Ελπηρον*, which has been already noticed at p. 108.‡

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\* Simeon Thessal. *Lib. de Templo et Missa*, apud Goar, pp. 215, 216.

† The Greeks have another linen covering for the altar, denominated *Antiminsia*, which is an oblong piece of linen, having attached to it a small purse or bag, containing saints' relics. Palls of this description are blessed by their bishops, at the dedication of churches, and afterwards are carried about, and spread out, before saying mass, upon those altars that have never been consecrated. They serve, in reality, all the purposes of the portable altars in use throughout the Latin Church.

‡ In the Constitutions promulgated by the Catholic Archbishops of Canterbury, several particular mandates were issued concerning altar-cloths. Walter Reynold, who occupied the primacy somewhere about 1322, decreed that,—“*Linteamina, Pallæ, Corporalia, et alia indumenta altaris integra sint et mundissima*; (Provinciale, *Gulielmi Lyndwood*, p. 235) and amongst the articles of church-furniture which Archbishop Robert Winchelsey (A. D. 1305) determined to be incumbent on the parishioners in his province to provide for their respective parish-churches, were—“*Frontale ad magnum altare, cum tribus Tuellis*, which Lynwood (A. D. 1422) in his annotations, explains to be an antependium for the high altar, and three linen napkins, one which was to serve as a towel for wiping the priest's fingers when he washes them at mass, (see

**XI.—ORNAMENTS OF THE ALTAR : CANOPY : VEILS :  
THE CROSS : CANDLESTICKS : CHALICES : FLOWERS.**

**CANOPY.** No sooner did the Christian religion behold the erection for her service of those sumptuous edifices which Constantine the Great constructed at Rome, Jerusalem and other cities of the empire,\* than she observed her altars to become the principal object of devotion and ornament. The sacred altar-table that, whenever it was practicable, was made to overhang the subterranean tomb of an apostle or some glorious martyr in the catacombs below, was, in its turn, overshadowed by a canopy fashioned like a cupola surmounted by a cross,† and richly adorned with sculptured ornaments, but always resting on four columns, in general of porphyry or some precious marble, and even sometimes of silver overlaid with gold, and planted at the four corners of the holy

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*pp.* 113, 114) the remaining two as cloths to be spread under the corporal (*p.* 252) which he remarks is denominated by such a name, because it signifies the linen bands with which the body of our divine Redeemer was enveloped in the sepulchre.

\* These churches were denominated Basilicæ, not only from the circumstance of being built after the models of such edifices as bore that name amongst the Pagan Romans, and of which not a few were converted into churches; but also from the regal magnificence and riches which adorned them.

† Paulus Silentarius. A.D. 555.

altar.\* This dome-like canopy was more usually denominated *ciborium*†—Κιβώριον—from its sup-

\* According to the Fathers of the Church who have written on mystic theology, such materials, independent of their richness, were selected on account of the spiritual meaning attached to them. (St. Dionysii Areop. *de Cælest. Hierar. c. ii.*) Gold was esteemed as a symbol of the celestial essence: hence the doves and vessels containing the Eucharist, were made of this precious metal. Porphyry, by its deep glowing tinge, was regarded as a type of divine and lively fervour. (St. Dionysii Areop. *de Angel. Hier. c. xiv.*) Most of the ancient altars in Rome have porphyry columns around them.

† There anciently prevailed a custom, as was remarked before, (*p. 281*) of enclosing the blessed Eucharist, reserved, under the form of bread, for the communion of the dying, in a hanging vessel of gold, or silver, made sometimes in the form of a turret, but more generally like a dove, which was suspended by a cord, from the interior of the altar-canopy or ciborium. In process of time, this custom was changed; and the blessed sacrament, contained in a pyxis—a cup resembling a chalice with a cover—was deposited within a species of little temple that was erected on the altar, and built to resemble the ciborium or canopy with its dome and columns, with this exception, that the intervening spaces between the columns were filled up with marble or wood, according to the material of which it happened to be constructed; and it was accessible only to the priest who possessed the key of its little portal. To this diminutive temple was transferred, in Italy, the name of ‘ciborium;’ while the larger prototype or canopy was called ‘umbraculum.’ In other

countries, and in England among the rest, it was denominated 'tabernacle,' a name which it has ever since continued to retain. In Italy, however, what we understand by 'tabernacle,' is termed 'ciborio;' and the canopy, (and one is usually suspended over the high-altar, and in general hangs from the roof of the church, though, sometimes, as at Rome, it rests, as anciently, upon four columns) is called 'baldacchino.'

It would appear that the ancient practice of keeping the blessed Eucharist reserved for the communion of the sick, and to receive the perpetual adoration of the people, in a cup, or chalice, suspended before the altar, was observed in Catholic England up to a much later period than in some kingdoms on the Continent; and that the use, for a similar purpose, of tabernacles fixed in the centre of the altar, was not introduced here until about a century previous to the unhappy change in the national religion. Of this custom we have various traces in our old native writers. Roger de Hoveden, professor of theology at Oxford in 1198, refers to it, as he notices the snapping, on a certain occasion, of the chain which upheld this pendent tabernacle, and says;—'Cecidit etiam super altare pyxis, cui corpus Christi inerat, abrupto vinculo.' (*Hist. Anglic. p. 486*) And Gervasius, the monk of Canterbury (A.D. 1201), in his description of a fire which consumed part of the cathedral in that city, relates that the pyxis containing the blessed Eucharist which used to hang over the high-altar, was rescued by a certain monk from the conflagration.—'Suscepit a monacho quodam pyxidem cum Eucharistia quæ desuper majus altare pendere solebat.' Lyndwood observes that, although the custom followed at his time, (A.D. 1422) of keeping the body of our Lord within a canopy suspended before the altar, was commendable, in as much as it exhibited the

Eucharist in a way more conspicuous to public view, for adoration ; yet he preferred the method which he had lately witnessed to prevail in Holland and Portugal, of depositing the blessed sacrament within a niche inserted in the wall, and placing it under lock and key ; for in this manner all irreverence towards the sacrament was prevented, by placing the sacred vessel which contained it, beyond the rash and unhallowed touch of the profane, and in a place of security where the cupidity of the sacrilegious could not reach it. ‘*Licet enim consuetudo Anglicana ut scilicet Eucharistia in canopeo pendeat super altare—commendabilis sit illa consideratione, qua citius repræsentatur nostris aspectibus adoranda, non tamen est commendabilis eo respectu quo ponitur in loco publico, sic quod ad eam manus temerariæ de facili valeant extendi. Nam licet in cupa, quæ forsân clausa est, pendeat ; tamen ad illam deorsum mittendam, vel forsân cum illâ cupâ totaliter auferendam, manus temerariæ de facili possunt apponi. Et ideo, ut mihi videtur, commendabilior est usus aliorum locorum quæ vidi, viz. in Hollandia et Portugallia, in quibus ordinatur unus locus singularis honestus prope altare, in quo reponitur Eucharistia sub clavibus infra parietes vel locum bene munitum conservanda, sic quod nullus ad ipsam Eucharistiam accedere poterit nisi sacerdos loci illius clavem custodiens.*’—*Provinc. Gulielmi Lynwood, lib. iii. p. 248.*

It should be observed that the term ‘*ciborium.*’ which originally designated the canopy over the high-altar, and was afterwards, as it still continues to be in Italy, applied to signify a little temple in which the holy Eucharist is reserved, has been assigned in England, to signify the chalice-like covered cup itself which contains the sacred species ; while elsewhere the same vessel is generally denominated by the more appropriate appellation of *pyxis*



posed resemblance to the bowl of a reversed cup, so designated by the Greeks.\*

**VEILS.** Between these columns were in many churches suspended veils or curtains, frequently embroidered in the richest manner, and interwoven with threads of gold,† which were drawn around

or pyx. In the Greek Church, the blessed sacrament is reserved behind the altar, upon which a volume of the Gospels always rests. A lamp, kept perpetually burning, is suspended in such a manner as to hang between the altar and the place for the blessed sacrament, and is regarded by the Greeks as a becoming token of reverence towards the word of God inscribed within the sacred volume, and the Word made flesh, Christ Jesus dwelling amongst us, but veiled under the appearance of the sacramental species. Goar, *Euchol. Græc.* p. 15.

\* *Κιβωρίον* properly signifies the globular pod which contains the seeds of the *Nymphæa nelumbo*, or sacred Lotus of the Egyptians. By the ancients it was frequently cut in two, and its bowls employed as drinking-cups.

† These veils were called *tetravela* in the Latin, and *Ἀμφίδυρα* or *Παραπετασµατα* in the Greek Church; and the mystic signification of them, when drawn around the altar, is explained in beautiful language by Simeon of Thessalonica, in his book '*On the Temple and the Liturgy*,' when he says;—'By the veils of the altar, is imaged the celestial tabernacle of God wherein dwell legions of angels, and the saints repose in peace.'—Goar, *Euchol.* p. 215. Anastasius frequently mentions the presents of these veils which were made by the popes to the several great churches at Rome. 'Hic fecit in circuitu altaris basilicæ Tetravila octo, quatuor ex albis, et quatuor ex coccino.'—

the altar until after the communion. That it was once the custom in some places in England to hang veils round the altar, may be conjectured from an illumination which serves as the frontispiece to the manuscript life of St. Thomas à Becket, preserved in the Cotton library.\* The illumination exhibits the figure of a priest saying Mass at an altar, at the sides of which are suspended two veils. The custom of veiling the altar at any part of the holy sacrifice, has fallen into disuse in the Latin Church, but is still, though in a manner varying from the ancient practice, retained amongst the Greeks, who divide their sanctuary from the body of the church, by a wainscot-partition in which there are three door-ways, fitted up below with a small wicket, and having the higher part of the interstice veiled with curtains on which is painted the figure of the archangel St. Michael, with a stern terrific countenance, holding in his hand a flaming sword.†

The centre-opening in this partition, which somewhat resembles the altar-screens and chancel-railings in our old English churches and venerable Catholic cathedrals, is denominated the royal gate,

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*In Sergio.* ‘Fecit et in circuitu altaris, ubi supra, alia vela alba holoserica rosata, quæ pendent in arcu de ciborio numero quatuor.’—*In Leone* iii.

\* It is marked, *Julius*, A. 11.

† Goar, *Euchol.* p. 18.

because it is through it, that the deacon, previously to receiving the Eucharist, exhibits the sacrament to the adoration of the people ; and, also, because at its threshold the lay communicant is permitted to participate in it.\* These gates are closed, and the veils are spread over them, when that part of the liturgy arrives, which we denominate the Creed,† and continue so until the elevation.‡ We have already adverted to the beautiful passage in the writings of St. John Chrysostom, in which he describes this ceremony.§ The painting on the curtains is not without its spiritual meaning amongst the Greeks ; who conceive, that as the gates of paradise were guarded by cherubim with a flaming sword,|| the figure of the archangel brandishing his radiant arms, is not inappropriately affixed, like a heavenly sentinel, at the portals of the sanctuary,—the Eden where they consider Jesus Christ to have descended, to be really and substantially present in the Eucharist.¶

CROSS. When the period had arrived that no danger existed of giving scandal to the newly-initiated neophyte by exhibiting the figure of the cross before him, we perceive that this holy sign was made to constitute a conspicuous ornament about the altar. Sometimes it was affixed on the sum-

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\* *Euchol.* p 151. † *Ib.* pp. 75, 134. ‡ *Ib.* pp. 84, 151.

§ Page 142. || *Gen. C.* iii. V. 24.

¶ *Goar, Euchol. Græc.* p. 134.

mit of the Ciborium or canopy,\* at other times it rested immediately upon the altar.†

CANDLESTICKS. Another conspicuous ornament were the gold and silver lamps and candelabra which encircled the altar, and during the celebration of the holy mysteries, shed not only splendour and brilliancy, but fragrance around it, fed as they were, sometimes with the most costly aromatic balsams, or supplied by perfumed wax, that diffused odours while they burned, as was observed in chapter XI.‡

CHALICES. The chalices and sacred vessels used for offering up the Eucharistic sacrifice, were not unfrequently employed on great solemnities to ornament the sacred table upon which they were arranged in rows, and intermingled with the dip-tychs or carved ivory tablets of which mention was made in a preceding chapter.§ Although the

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\* Paulus Silentarius, apud *Du Fresne*, p. 569.

† Sozomen, A.D. 440. *Lib.* ii. c. 3. Evagrius, (A.D. 594) takes notice of the silver crosses presented by Chosroes to one of the churches at Constantinople, to be placed upon the altar.—*Evag. lib.* vi. c. 21.

‡ See p. 595.

§ That the altars erected by the early Christians in the catacombs, and those that were built, at later periods, in the side-chapels and oratories of large churches, were ornamented with paintings, either in fresco, or on pannel, is certain. In proof of this, may be noticed the chapel

service to which these vessels were dedicated, and not the richness of the materials, formed the criterion of the value in the estimation of the pious Christian, still, however, from a reverence towards the tremendous sacrifice,\* we observe that, wherever

with its altar in the catacombs, given as a frontispiece to this volume; as well as the description of a cemeterial oratory and altar, in the verses of Prudentius. (*See pp. 379, 391.*) It was only when the custom was introduced of placing the altar leaning against the wall, and of saying mass in such a manner, that the celebrant stood, not with his face, but with his back, towards the people, as at present, that the altar-piece, according to its present form, was introduced. The diptychs, exhibiting their sculptures to the spectator, stood unfolded on the isolated altars that looked towards the people. When the position of the altar was changed, instead of resting on the altar itself, these diptychs were affixed upon that part of the wall immediately above it, and in time were replaced by paintings. Hence the origin of our present form of altar-pieces. (*See p. 697, &c.*)

\* Not only the altar, but the chalices, the patenæ, and every utensil employed in offering up the eucharistic sacrifice, were regarded with much religious reverence. They were consigned to the jealous custody of the deacons, who deposited them in a particular recess near the altar, called *Sceuphylacium*, whither they were conveyed, in general, immediately after mass. Not only laics, but subdeacons, and every other order of inferior clergy, were prohibited from handling them; (*Concil. Laodic. cap. xxi. Concil. Agath. cap. lxvi.*) and it was reputed a sacrilege of

circumstances would allow it, the most costly substances were appropriated to that purpose; and chalices were made not only of glass,\* and of silver, but sometimes of crystal, onyx, sardonyx, and of the purest gold. Like the altar, they were anci-

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the deepest profanation to use them for any other purpose than the celebration of the holy sacrifice; excepting in the season of distress, when it was conceived an act of laudable charity to apply even the sacred vessels of the sanctuary in alleviating the distresses of the poor.

\* That the chalice used by the impostor Marcus was of glass, or crystal, may be inferred from the manner in which St. Irenæus notices one of the proceedings of that heresiarch. This Marcus, who lived in the second century, availed himself of some sleight-of-hand, or rather of the knowledge of a chemical secret, for the propagation of his errors. Over a chalice containing white wine mingled with a little water, it was his custom to pronounce, in imitation of the Christian priesthood in the consecration of the Eucharist, a solemn formula of prayer. At the end of his impious invocation, which was very long, this impostor so contrived,—no doubt by the dexterous infusion of his chemical secret,—that, instead of white, there appeared red wine in his transparent chalice, to the surrounding gazers, who were persuaded to believe, that through his words, the visible transmutation of the wine had been accomplished by the sovereign grace which causes its own blood to flow into the cup, for them to drink. ‘*Pro calice vino mixto fingens se gratias agere, et in multum extendens sermonem invocationis, purpureum et rubicundum apparere fecit poculum, ut putetur ea gratia ab iis, quæ sunt super omnia, suum sanguinem stillare in*

ently, as they are now, consecrated and anointed before being used in the service of religion, throughout all the Church whether Latin or Oriental.\*

**FLOWERS.** The innocent and expressive, at the same time beautiful, ornament of flowers was not forgotten by the ancient Christians in the decoration of their churches, but especially their altars. St. Augustin particularly mentions this custom as he notices the renunciation of paganism for christianity made by the expiring Martialis whose son-

illius calicem, per invocationem ejus.' Unless the Church then taught, and the faithful believed in, the doctrine of transubstantiation, the impostor Marcus would never have pretended to possess a power similar to that publicly recognized in the priesthood, of changing, by virtue of the words of consecration, wine into the blood, at the Eucharistic sacrifice. D'Agincourt has given three chalices of glass, one of which is coloured and highly ornamented, *tom. vi. pp. 30, 31; tom. xii.*

\* See Renaudot, *tom. i. p. 323, Liturgiar. Oriental. Collectio.* From the ancient custom of the Church, of consecrating by prayers and unctions, not only chalices, but every other vessel and utensil destined for holding the Eucharist, joined to her solicitude in depositing them in places secure from the touch of any but the ministers of religion, and preserving them from the remotest danger of being employed in profane uses, may be collected a powerful argument in favour of the general and ancient belief in the real presence of Jesus Christ in the sacrament of the altar.

in-law, after praying with much fervour for his conversion at the foot of St. Stephen's altar, approached as he was going away, and carried off from it some of the flowers that were placed there,\* and conveyed them to the couch of his dying relative.

St. Jerom particularly panegyryzes his friend Nepotian for his devotional assiduity in adorning the walls of the church with a variety of flowers, and the boughs of trees;† and St. Paulinus of Nola refers to the same practice as he describes the manner of celebrating the annual festival of his patron saint, St. Felix, in the following verses;—

Ferte Deo pueri laudem, pia solvite vota,  
Spargite flore solum, prætexite limina sertis:  
Purpureum ver spiret hiems, sit floreus annus  
Ante diem, sancto cedat natura diei.—*S. Paulin. Nat. iii.*

Hymn praise to God, ye youths; discharge your vows;  
Strew flowers around; the threshold wreath with boughs.  
Let hoary winter sigh like purple spring;  
And the young year his earliest garlands bring  
Before their season; thus shall nature pay  
A fitting homage to this hallow'd day.‡

\* Deinde abscedens, aliquid de altari florum, quod occurrit tulit.—*De Civit. Dei, lib. xxii. c. 7.*

† Basilicas Ecclesiæ et martyrum conciliabula diversis floribus, et arborum comis vitiumque pampinis adumbravit.—*Hieron. Epist. iii.*

‡ The custom of ornamenting the altar with flowers; of strewing leaves upon the pavement of churches; and hanging their doors with wreaths of ever-greens, is still kept up in Italy. The beautiful flower-carpet, called the *Inflorata*, which is annually designed and strewed along one of the principal streets at Gensano, a town near Rome,



## XII.—THE RESPECT PAID TO ALTARS.—ASYLUM.

That the ancient Fathers of the Church, whether Greek or Latin, were unanimous in exhibiting much religious reverence towards the altar, and in requiring the faithful to regard it with similar respect, is evident from those unequivocal epithets indicative of honour and of sanctity, under which they designate it in their writings and discourses. The sacred—the divine table; the holy—the most holy altar; the altar of Christ; the table of the Lord, are the common appellations under which they mention it.\* Nor did this reverence consist in words alone; it was unceasingly manifested by other proofs of homage.

On entering a church, Latins, Greeks, and Orientals, have, from time immemorial, been accustomed to bow towards the altar;† we still continue

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for the procession of Corpus Christi, excites the admiration of every traveller, by its elegance and ingenuity. The custom of decorating the church with green boughs and flowers, still partially lingers in England; but the elegant and appropriate use of flowers, in the celebration of a religious festival, is nowhere witnessed nor displayed with purer taste than at the romantic village of Tissington, Derbyshire, where is observed, on the feast of the Ascension, what is denominated ‘well-flowering.’

\* Demonstrative proofs of this may be abundantly collected from the several extracts from their writings which have been noticed in this chapter.

† See the Liturgies of St. Chrysostom and St. Basil.

to show this token of our homage to the sacred table.\* That not only the threshold and door-posts of the Church were revered by the prostrations and embraces of the pious,† but that similar honours were also paid to the altar, is evident from the testimony of ancient writers. St. Ambrose particularly mentions the joy which animated the soldiers, as they entered his church at Milan, and crowded round the altar, which they devoutly kissed, as they published the news that the emperor had revoked his edict for surrendering the churches in that city to the Arians;‡ and St. Athanasius bore witness to the devotion of many whom he beheld going to the holy altar, embracing it with fear mingled with joy.§

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\* The Jews, on entering the Temple, bowed towards the mercy-seat.

† *Triumphalibus Apostolorum liminibus affusus, &c. Sidonius Apol. lib. i. Epist. 5.*—*Sternitur ante fores et postibus oscula figit, Paulinus, Natal. Felix.*

‡ *Certatim hoc nunciare milites, irruentes in altaria oculis significare pacis insigne. Lib. v. Epist. 33.*

§ Alvarez, in his account of the Ethiopian Christians, informs us, that whenever their emperor takes the field, four priests accompany him, conveying on their shoulders a case covered over with cloth of gold, containing the consecrated altar-stone; four other priests follow to relieve their brethren in carrying the holy burden; and two minor clergy go on before, one of whom bears a cross and a thurible, the other carries a little bell, at the sound of which, every one whom they meet upon the road, stops ;

ASYLUM. Such a religious respect for the altar is attested by another usage of antiquity, by which the most inviolable protection was afforded to those who fled to the holy table, and thus obtained for themselves, against the oppression of the powerful, the vengeance of an insulted neighbour, or the power of the outraged laws, that security which is denominated 'Asylum.' The antiquity of such a refuge is attested by the writings of many holy fathers. St. Gregory Nazianzen instances the courage of St. Basil, in affording protection to a widow who had sought refuge at the altar of his church, from the importunity and persecutions which she had to suffer from the Governor of Pontus ;† and in Synesius, as well as in other ancient writers, the altar is frequently denominated the Ασυλός τράπεζα, or table of asylum, from which it was unlawful to force any one away.‡

### XIII.—RECAPITULATION.

In perusing the foregoing paragraphs, the most superficial observer must have noticed the similarity in the language which is employed, and the uniformity of ideas exhibited by all antiquity with reference to the altar. It is a matter of fact that

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and those who happen to be on horseback dismount, to exhibit a becoming respect to the altar as it passes.

† *Naz. Orat. xx. De Laud. Basilii.*

‡ *Syn. Epist. lviii.*

forces itself upon every one's attention that, from the Apostolic era up to the present moment, the pastors of the Church have invariably spoken of the sacred table, however incidentally they may have happened to refer to it, as the altar of the living God—the holy—the sacred—the tremendous altar upon which there is offered up a true—a real sacrifice: the victim for this sacrifice, they have unanimously proclaimed to be the Son of God—Christ Jesus—whose same body and whose same blood once immolated in a bloody manner on the Cross, are now daily, nay hourly sacrificed in an unbloody manner on our altars, and afterwards partaken of both by the sacrificing priest, and the attendant people. Not only do we hear such a doctrine insisted on as a necessary and universally accredited article of faith, and that too in expressions free from the faintest shade of ambiguity, and by the teachers of the christian religion dwelling in regions widely separated from each other, and flourishing at epochs with the lapse of centuries dividing them; not only do we witness the entire body of the faithful assenting to such a tenet, and echoing it back, but we everywhere behold the profound and well defined impression with which this belief has stamped the entire Church of Christ, pastors as well as laymen; and how it has from the birth of Christianity, not only extended its influence to the arrangement of every Liturgy, and the con-

struction of the house of God, and determined the distribution of its parts, and style of ornament, but insinuated itself into the civil institutions of so many nations. If we take the trouble to peruse and collate the ancient Liturgies, we shall immediately discover that each of their respective authors had no other object in view, while arranging them, than to draw up a rite or ceremony for offering up sacrifice; for in all these venerable documents of primitive belief, without one solitary exception, the correlative terms of victim, sacrifice, priest, and altar, are invariably found. If we search amongst the earliest monuments of Christianity, in every nation, whether these monuments consist of edifices dedicated to the worship of the Deity, and are now standing;\* or whether they be de-

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\* During a thousand years, so indissolubly associated in the minds of the inhabitants of these islands, were the ideas of altar and of sacrifice, that, on the breaking out of the great heresy, at the commencement of the sixteenth century, the patrons of the new belief soon began to encounter the difficulty of eradicating the old doctrine of the Eucharistic sacrifice of the mass, as long as the sacred table, upon which it used to be offered, was permitted to continue standing. Their innovating zeal was, therefore, immediately employed in overturning every altar which could be discovered, in cathedral, humble parish-church, or private oratory; and such was the searching diligence with which they perpetrated the annihilation of the altars of the most high God, that not a solitary one of the many

scriptions of splendid temples now dwindled into dust, and only known by an enumeration of their beauties and magnificence, recorded in the writings of the ancients ;—every where shall we behold an altar for sacrifice, occupying the principal and most conspicuous situation, and regarded by all as an object of peculiar respect, the immediate boundary of which was considered so hallowed, on account of the sacrifice of Christ Jesus there, that to desecrate it, was a heinous crime ; and not only the demon-sisters, Hatred, and Revenge, and Persecution, but Justice herself, glowing with lawful indignation, would arrest her footsteps at the threshold of the sanctuary, nor dare to go forward and drag the object of her pursuit from the horns of that altar which he was embracing. We shall see, too, that it was profound devotion towards the victim offered there, that stimulated the piety of the faithful to spread the richest carpets round the altar ; to hang the most gorgeous veils on every side of it ; to canopy it with domes of porphyry, or silver ; to pile chalices of gold, or precious stones

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thousands that once stood in England, can now be pointed out, to satisfy the cravings of the antiquarian scholar, or the architect. How much the turbulence of the religious innovators in the sixteenth century, resembled the outrages committed in the fourth, by the Donatists and Arians, who burned and overturned the altars of the Catholics ! (See p. 719.)

upon it ; to render it, in fine, as glorious as possible. Having ascertained the sense of the Church of Christ upon this article of doctrine, through such a multitude and variety of testimonies, the sincere Christian will recognize the Mass to be a true and real sacrifice.

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### CHAPTER XVII.

#### ON INCENSE.

1. Incense used under the old Law.—2. Noticed in the New Testament.—3. Adopted by the primitive Church.—4. Incense prescribed in all the Liturgies.—5. Spiritual meaning of Incense.



## PART THE SECOND.

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### CHAPTER XVII.

#### ON INCENSE.

##### I.—INCENSE USED UNDER THE OLD LAW.

OF the several rites which the Catholic Church employs for the celebration of her Liturgy, and in performing the other functions of divine worship, the burning of incense is not the least conspicuous. Hence a separate chapter has been dedicated to investigate by whom this ceremony was originally employed in the service of religion ; to ascertain its general observance throughout the East and West ; and to enumerate some amongst those monuments of antiquity that testify its adoption in the earliest ages of the Christian faith.

It was thus that Moses received particular injunctions from God to employ incense in the service of the tabernacle :—‘ Thou shalt make an altar to burn incense of setim-wood, and thou shalt overlay it with the purest gold, and thou shalt make to it a crown of gold round about ; and Aaron shall burn

sweet-smelling incense upon it in the morning\*— Take unto thee spices, stacte, and onycha, galbanum of sweet savour, and the clearest frankincense, all shall be of equal weight, and thou shalt make incense compounded by the work of the perfumer well tempered together, and pure, and most worthy of sanctification. And when thou hast beaten all into very small powder, thou shalt set of it before the tabernacle of the testimony, in the place where I will appear to thee. Most holy shall this incense be unto you. You shall not make such a composition for your own uses, because it is holy to the Lord.† Directing how the high-priest was to enter into the sanctuary, the Lord commanded, that ‘taking the censer which he had filled with the burning coals of the altar, and taking up with his hand the compounded perfume for incense, he should go in within the veil into the holy place, that when the perfumes were put upon the fire, the cloud and vapour thereof might cover the oracle.‡ Amongst the vessels which Solomon provided for the service of the house of the Lord, are particularly enumerated the censers which he caused to be made of the most pure gold.§

## II.—NOTICED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

It was from this religious custom of employing

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\* *Exod. C. xxx. V. 1-3-7.* † *Ib. V. 34-37.* ‡ *Levit. C. xvi. V. 12-13.* § *3 Kings, C. vii. V. 50.* (Prot. Ver. *1 Kings, &c.*

incense in the ancient temple, that the royal prophet drew that beautiful simile of his, when he petitioned that his prayers might ascend before the Lord like incense.\* It was while 'all the multitude was praying without at the hour of incense, that there appeared to Zachary an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.† That the oriental nations attached a meaning not only of personal reverence, but also of religious homage,‡ to an offering of incense, is demonstrable from the instance of the Magi, who having fallen down to adore the new-born Jesus, and recognize his divinity, presented him with gold, and myrrh and frankincense.§ That he might be more intelligible to those who read his book of the Apocalypse, it is very probable that St. John adapted his language to the ceremonial of the Liturgy then followed by the Christians in celebrating the Eucharistic sacrifice, at the period the evangelist committed to writing his mysterious revelations. In depicting, therefore, the scene which took place in the sanctuary of heaven, where he was given to behold in vision the mystic sacrifice of the Lamb, we are

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\* The Jewish shekel, but particularly the coins struck by Simon Machabeus, present, on the obverse, the figure of a smoking thurible.

† *St. Luke, C. i. V. 10, 11.*

‡ Calmet, *Dissert. in C. ii. St. Mark.*

§ *St. Matt. C. ii. V. 11.*

warranted to suppose that he borrowed his imagery, and selected several of his expressions from the ritual then actually in use, and has, in consequence, bequeathed to us an outline of the ceremonial which the Church employed in the apostolic ages for offering up the unbloody sacrifice of the same divine Lamb of God, Christ Jesus, in her sanctuaries upon earth. Now St. John particularly notices how the 'Angel came, and stood before the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which is before the throne of God; and the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints ascended up before God, from the hand of the angel.'\*

### III.—ADOPTED BY THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

The primitive Christians imitated the example of the Jews,† and adopted the use of incense at the celebration of the Liturgy.‡ By the third of the Apostolical canons,§ we find it enacted that amongst the very few things which might be offered at the altar, whilst the Eucharistic sacrifice was celebrating, were oil for the lights, and in-

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\* *Apoc. C. viii. V. 3-5.*

† *Casalius, de Sacris Christianorum Ritibus, p. 229.*

‡ *Bona, Rerum Liturg. lib. I. c. xxv. sec. 9.*

§ At *p. 571* may be seen a note on these canons.

cense.\* To demonstrate, in his refutation of Daillé, that the use of incense, in the Church-service, was coeval with the Apostolic age, the learned Protestant bishop Beverege adduces an apposite passage from the writings of St. Hippolytus Portuensis, who evidently establishes the fact of its being employed in the ceremonies of the Church in his days, by the prophetic remark, that, at the consummation of the world, the Churches would be overwhelmed with profound grief as they witnessed the cessation of sacrifice and incense.† The

\* Μὴ ἐξὸν δὲ ἔστω προσάγεσθαι τι ἕτερον εἰς το θυσιαστήριον ἢ ἔλαιον εἰς τὴν λυχνίαν καὶ θυμίαμα, τῷ καιρῷ της ἀγίας προσφορᾶς.

In answer to the words of Tertullian, who says;— ‘Thura plane non emimus. Si Arabiæ queruntur, scient Sabæi pluris et carioris suas merces Christianis sepeliendis profligari, quam diis suffumigandis,’ (Tertul. *Apol. c. xxiv.*) the Protestant bishop Beverege replies that the only legitimate consequence that can be adduced from them, is that perhaps in Tertullian’s time the Church of Africa did not use incense, but it by no means follows that incense was not employed elsewhere.—Beveregius, *Condex Canonum Vindicatus*, p. 171.

† Πενθῶνσι δὲ αἱ ἐκκλησίαι πένθος μεγα, διότι οὔτε προσφορὰ, οὔτε θυμίαμα ἐκτελεῖται.—*Lib. de Consummatione Mundi*. In an excavation near St. Laurence’s Fuori delle Mura at Rome, A.D. 1551, was discovered a marble statue of this learned and venerable martyr, who is represented as sitting in an episcopal chair, on the sides of which are engraved his celebrated Paschal cycle, and the titles of several works of his composition. This statue is now deposited in the

testimony of St. Ambrose concerning the use of incense at the altar is lucid. 'Oh!' exclaims the illustrious bishop, 'Oh that with us while incensing the altar and offering up sacrifice, an angel would assist, nay, would render himself visible!'<sup>\*</sup> St. Ephræm, a Father of the Syriac Church, which he ornamented toward the decline of the fourth century,<sup>†</sup> directed in his will that no aromatic perfumes should be bestowed upon him at his funeral, but that the spices should rather be given to the sanctuary, the aromatics offered to the Almighty, and the incense burned in the house of God.<sup>‡</sup>

#### IV.—INCENSE PRESCRIBED IN ALL THE LITURGIES.

##### The use of incense in all the Oriental Churches

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Vatican library. The learned prelate Monsignor Angelo Mai has published this cycle in Vol. v. of his *Scriptorum Veterum Nova Collectio*, p. 70.

\* 'Utinam nobis quoque adolentibus altaria et sacrificium deferentibus assistat angelus, immo præbeat se videntum.'—*In Cap. i. Lucæ.*

† A.D. 370.

‡ 'Ne cum aromatibus me sepeliatis; non enim hic mihi honor prodest: neque mecum suaves odores ponatis; non enim decet me gloria. Sed thura date in sanctuario; me autem orationibus vestris comitamini. Aromata offerite Deo, et Psalmis me prosequimini. Pro odoribus et aromatibus, mei memoriam in deprecationibus vestris peragite. Quid enim mortuo proderit suavis odor, jam sensu carenti? Incensa adolete in domo Dei, ut qui illam ingrediuntur, suavi odore perfundantur.



is perpetual and almost daily, nor do any of them ever celebrate their Liturgy without it, unless compelled by necessity.\* The Coptic, as well as the other Eastern Christians, observe the same ceremonial as the Latin Church in incensing the altar, the sacred vessels, and ecclesiastical personages.†

The most ancient of the three Greek Liturgies is that of St. James, from whom it is esteemed by the Greeks, and Syrian Christians of Jerusalem to have been originally derived.‡ This liturgy commences with burning incense, which the celebrant puts into the thurible after he has approached to the altar. Immediately afterwards he incenses the Eucharistic bread, the smaller veil with which he covers the chalice, and the larger one which he spreads over the disk and chalice. He then incenses all the altar around, as well as those who are assisting there. Meanwhile all recite the following prayer as the officiating priest passes;—  
‘ Through the grace of thy benignity, receive the pure incense which the sons of the faithful Church have offered to thee to propitiate thy divinity. Have mercy on the penitent, and as Abraham’s oblation on the mountain’s top was received, and as the odour of the incense of Aaron the priest was sweet to Thee, so may the odour of our incense

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\* Renaudotii, *Liturgiar. Orient. Collectio*, tom. i. p. 200.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid. tom. ii. pp. 2, 3.

be grateful unto Thee, and be appeased by it,  
O God of much mercy.\*

Amongst the munificent and truly imperial donations of Constantine the Great to the churches of Rome, Anastasius has not forgotten to put on record the golden thuribles presented by that emperor, who gave to the Lateran basilica two of these vessels, formed of the purest gold, each weighing several pounds; and to the baptistery belonging to the same church, a third thurible, likewise of the purest gold, and ornamented with a profusion of gems and precious stones.†

The use of the thurible for burning incense during the solemnization of Mass amongst the Anglo-Saxons, was not passed over without an especial notice by our countryman, the celebrated Alcuin, who has left a poetical description of this rite.‡

#### V.—SPIRITUAL MEANING OF INCENSE.

If we come to inquire, we shall find that it

\* Renaudotii, *Liturgiar. Orient. Collectio. tom. ii. p. 4.*

† Thimiamateria duo ex auro purissimo pens. libras triginta....Thimiamaterium aureum cum gemmis prasinis et hyacinthinis xlii. pens. libras decem.—Anastasius, *in Vita S. Silvestri, tom. i. p. 31.*

‡ Hic quoque Thuribulum capitellis undique cinctum,  
Pendit de summo fumosa foramina pandens  
De quibus ambrosia spirabunt thura Sabæa  
Quando sacerdotes Missas offerre jubentur.

Alcuinus, *Poem. 111.*

would be difficult to select any thing which could be a more appropriate symbol of prayer.

1. The burning of incense at the altar indicates that the place is holy and consecrated to the worship of Almighty God, in whose service every creature ought to be employed, and, if necessary, consumed, to exhibit a proper homage, and to proclaim his glory.

2. A venerable antiquity informs us that the incense burnt around the altar, whence, as from a fountain of delicious fragrance, it emanates and perfumes the temple of God, has ever been regarded as a type of that good odour of Jesus Christ which should exhale from the soul of every true disciple.

3. Incense has invariably been considered as beautifully figurative of the sincere Christian's prayers. In fact, it would be impossible to select any symbol better calculated to signify to us what our prayers should be. The incense cannot ascend on high, unless it be first enkindled ; so our prayers, which are, in reality, the desires of the heart, cannot mount before the throne of heaven, unless that heart be glowing with the fire of God's holy love. Nothing arises of the incense but what is of a grateful odour ; we should, therefore, ask of God that he would prepare our hearts in a manner that such petitions may be breathed from them as have a holy fragrance ; we should exclaim with the Psalmist ;—‘ Let my prayer, O Lord, be di-

rected as incense in thy sight.\* The whole of the incense is consumed, and every particle of it ascends in odorous vapours; so, also, all our aspirations should tend upwards towards our God; nor ought any of them to hover on the earth.

4. This spiritual perfume, to which all the ancient Liturgies refer, is not only symbolical of our petitions, but especially typifies the prayers of the saints, which are so often described in holy scripture to be an odour of sweetness before heaven. 'The four-and-twenty ancients,' says the sacred penman, 'fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints.'†

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### CONCLUSION.

WE have now brought to a conclusion the remarks which were considered expedient to illustrate those several points of doctrine and ritual observance comprehended in the Liturgy or holy Eucharistic sacrifice of the Mass. The reader, in his perusal of them, must have observed the perpetual, and, in numerous instances, exclusive reference which was made to the testimony of the sacred volumes; and it is presumed, in the opinion of the unbiassed

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*Psalms* cxl. V. 2.

† *Apoc. C.* v. V. 8.

reader, with such success as to warrant the assertion that those articles of Catholic doctrine here elucidated, far from being in any wise opposed to the spirit, or contradicted by the letter of the holy Scriptures, are triumphantly confirmed by them on every occasion.

Not only will the celebration of the holy sacrifice exhibit to him who is separated from Catholics in religious credence, a form of public worship which so accurately, but exclusively, realizes the prophetic declaration of Malachias;\* not only will it point out to his pious notice that clean oblation offered up to heaven amid every nation of the Gentiles, from the rising to the setting of the sun; but the Scripture-proofs on which it is based, must vindicate the truth of its being instituted by Jesus Christ himself.

In the illustration of the ceremonies and usages which accompany the solemnization of Mass, however superficial in his observations, every stranger to our Liturgy must have had his attention at once arrested by the venerable and apostolic antiquity of this service. In its rites he witnesses a ceremonial—he hears a voice in its language—he perceives in the vestments which array its ministers, so many testimonials which alone are sufficient to substantiate the ancient origin of the Mass,

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\* *C. i. V. 11.*

and refer its introduction to an epoch which beheld the birth of Christianity.

A doctrine which was promulgated by the lips of truth itself, Christ Jesus, and invariably delivered as a portion of his Gospel to those people who were initiated in its mysteries—a ceremonial which was instituted by the Apostles, and regulated by those who more immediately succeeded them, assuredly demand, and should obtain from each sincere follower of Christ, the recognition of their several claims upon his reverence: such is the Eucharistic sacrifice of the New Law, called the Mass, an elucidation of the doctrines, and an explanation of the ceremonies, of which, have constituted the object of the present volumes.

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## APPENDIX.

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## APPENDIX I.

*Referred to at p. 199, and exhibiting Extracts from the Ancient Liturgies, in proof that the doctrine of the Real Presence must have been taught in all the Churches which the Apostles or their immediate disciples founded.*

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THE late venerable Bishop Poynter, from whose work entitled 'Christianity' the following extracts were made, observes:—'The substance of the ancient Liturgies was derived from the Apostles, and communicated by them to the Churches, where they preached and established the religion of Christ. The first Liturgy was that which was formed and used by the apostles, in the Church of Jerusalem. Then other Liturgies were introduced into the other patriarchate Churches in the East, viz. of Alexandria, Antioch, and Constantinople.

'The names or titles affixed to the Liturgies are of little signification. Some of them, indeed, refer to the apostle who introduced the form of Christian worship in the churches where those Liturgies were used. But what is of the highest consequence is, that the Liturgies contain the common form and order of public worship, observed in those churches, and consequently, that they contain a public profession of the faith of all the clergy, and people attached to them, in the ages in which these Liturgies were in use.

'The most sacred part of the form of divine worship,

the Canon, (called the Anaphora in the Oriental Liturgies) during the first two or three centuries, was only committed to memory, and retained by the bishops and priests, as the Apostles' Creed was learnt and retained by the faithful. The Canon was not written till about the beginning of the fifth age ; when the danger of exposing all that was most sacred in the mysteries of religion to the derision and blasphemy of infidels, was not so great, as it was in the first two or three centuries. But when the Canon was generally committed to writing, it was found to be the same in substance in all Christian countries. This shewed the unity of its origin, in the unity of that faith, which was everywhere taught by the Apostles, and which was the spirit of the body and language of the Liturgies.

‘Amongst the Oriental Liturgies, those of the Greek schismatical Church, and particularly those of the Nestorians and Eutychians, are very deserving of notice. These Churches have received no rite of religion, no tradition, no doctrine, from the Church of Rome, since the time of their separation from its faith or communion. The Greek schismatical Church separated about the year 890 ; the Eutychians about 451 ; and the Nestorians about 431. The doctrinal language of the Liturgies of these Churches was not borrowed from the Church of Rome, after the period of their separation ; nor can any reasonable suspicion be entertained, that it was worded with any design of favouring the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church.

‘The Liturgies of the Nestorians and Eutychians were not originally composed by the founders of those sects ; they were the Liturgies of the Churches in which Nestorius and Eutyches were instructed in the Christian faith. A few insertions were afterwards introduced into them, expressing the peculiar doctrines of these heretical teachers,

which were as much in opposition to each other, as they were to the common doctrine of all other Christian Churches. But on all the points of Christian doctrine and worship, on the Trinity, on the Sacrifice of the Mass, on the Real Presence, on Transubstantiation, on the Invocation of Saints, on Prayers for the Dead, &c., the Liturgies of the Nestorians and Eutychians are perfectly conformable to all other ancient Liturgies. This circumstance affords strong evidence that the doctrines and religious rites of all Christian Churches were the same, previously to the period of the separation of Nestorius and Eutyches from the faith of the Catholic Church. Their errors were against two articles of the mystery of the Incarnation. Nestorius denied the unity of person in Christ, and Eutyches denied the distinction of two natures in Christ.

FROM THE LITURGY OF ST. JAMES.\*—Renaudot, *tom.ii.*

*‘ Priest. Have mercy on us, God the Father Almighty, and send thy Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, equal in dominion to thee and to thy Son, consubstantial and co-eternal, that coming, he may make this bread the life-giving body, the saving body, the heavenly body, the body giving health to souls and bodies, THE BODY OF OUR LORD GOD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, for the remission of sins, and eternal life to those who receive it.*

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\* This Liturgy was used in the Church of Jerusalem, and is usually denominated the Liturgy of St. James, as the substance of it was delivered by that apostle. Of all the Liturgies it is the most venerable for its antiquity, and has been commonly employed throughout Syria. The most celebrated critics consider it as the Liturgy which was expounded by St. Cyril of Jerusalem, in his Catecheses.

‘ *People.* Amen.

‘ *Priest.* And may make what is mixed in this chalice the blood of the New Testament, the saving blood, the life-giving blood, the heavenly blood, the blood giving health to souls and bodies, **THE BLOOD OF OUR LORD GOD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST**, for the remission of sins and eternal life to those who receive it.

‘ *People.* Amen.’—Page 33.

‘ *The Priest, from the larger part of the Eucharistic bread, breaks off a smaller part, which he dips in the chalice, and with it signs the rest in the form of a cross, saying: The blood of our Lord is sprinkled on his body, in the name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son, ✠ and of the Holy Ghost ✠.*’—Page 41.

‘ *The Priest takes the body of Christ, saying:—Grant, O Lord, that our bodies may be sanctified by thy holy body, and that our souls may be purified by thy propitiatory blood, &c.*’

‘ *Then he distributes the Eucharist to the priests, deacons, and laity, saying:—The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ is given to thee, for the pardon of offences, and the remission of sins, in this world and in the next.*’—Pages 41, 42.

FROM THE LITURGY OF ST. MARK.\*—Renaudot, tom. ii.

‘ *Priest.* To thee, O Lord our God, from thy own gifts we have offered before Thee what is thine: send down upon us and upon this bread and chalice, thy Holy Spirit,

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\* This Liturgy was used in the Church of Alexandria, and is generally denominated the Liturgy of St. Mark. It exhibits the ancient rite of the Church of Alexandria, and was constantly employed amongst the orthodox Christians of Egypt, till they were compelled to adopt the Liturgy of Constantinople.

that he may sanctify and consecrate them, as God Almighty, and may make the bread indeed the body.

*'People. Amen.*

*'Priest, raising his voice.* And the chalice, the blood of the New Testament, of the very Lord, and God, and Saviour, and our sovereign king, Jesus Christ.'—*Page 157.*

*'Priest.* Supreme Lord, God Almighty! we beseech thee to expel the darkness of sin from our minds, and to exhilarate them with the splendour of thy Holy Spirit, that, filled with a lively sense of thee, we may worthily partake of the good things that are given unto us, **THE IMMACULATE BODY AND PRECIOUS BLOOD OF THY ONLY BEGOTTEN SON**, our Lord, and God, and Saviour, Jesus Christ, &c.

*'The Priest, when he gives the communion to the clergy, says:—*The holy body: *and at the chalice he says:—*The precious blood of our Lord, and God, and Saviour.

*'The Priest says the prayer of thanksgiving:—*We pray and beseech thee, O good Lord, lover of mankind, that the communion of the holy body and precious blood of thy only begotten Son, may be to us a viaticum of eternal life, &c.'—*Page 163.*

*'Priest.* Thou hast given us, O Lord, sanctification, in the participation of the most holy body and precious blood of thine only begotten Son.'—*Page 165.*

FROM THE LITURGY OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM.\*—Goar.

*'The Deacon goes to the Priest, and both ADORE thrice before the holy table, and they pray secretly:—*O God, be propitious to me a sinner.

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\* This Liturgy is followed by all the Greek Christians of the Oriental and the Western Churches, as well as by the Georgians, the Mingrelians, Bulgarians, Russians, &c.

*'The Deacon, bending his head, shows the holy bread on the stole, and says secretly:—Bless, O Lord, the holy bread. And the Priest, standing erect, signs the holy mysteries thrice with a cross, and says secretly:—Make indeed this bread the precious body of thy Christ.*

*'The Deacon. Amen. And again the Deacon: Bless, O Lord, the holy chalice; and the Priest blessing it, says: And what is in this chalice, the precious blood of thy blood.*

*'The Deacon. Amen.*

*'The Priest prays in secret:—Look down on us, O Lord, Jesus Christ our God, from thy holy dwelling, and from the throne of the glory of thy kingdom, and come to sanctify us, Thou who sittest together with the Father in the highest heavens, and art here invisibly present with us; and vouchsafe, with thy powerful hand, to impart to us thy immaculate body, and thy precious blood, and by us to all the people.*

*'Priest. Holy things for holy persons.*

*'The Priest, with attention and devotion dividing the holy bread into four parts, says:—The Lamb of God is broken and divided, the Son of the Father; He is broken but not diminished: He is always eaten, but is not consumed; but He sanctifies those who are made partakers.*

*'The Priest, holding the holy bread, presents it to the Deacon, and the Deacon, kissing the hand presenting it, receives the holy bread, saying:—Give me, O Lord, the precious and holy body of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Priest says:—I give to thee the precious and holy and pure body of our Lord and God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins unto life everlasting.'*

*'In like manner the Priest receives the holy bread, and bowing down his head before the holy table, prays in this sort:—I believe, O Lord, and I confess, that thou art the Christ, the son of the living God, &c.*

*'Holding the chalice, he calls the Deacon, Saying :—Deacon, approach ; and the Deacon approaches, and ADORES once, saying :—Behold, I come to the immortal king, and I believe, O Lord, and confess, &c.*

*'And the Priest says :—' Servant of God, Deacon N. thou dost communicate of the PRECIOUS AND HOLY BODY AND BLOOD of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for the remission of thy sins, and everlasting life.'—Page 88.*

FROM THE SYRIAC LITURGY OF ST. BASIL, ONE  
OF THE MOST ANCIENT IN USE AMONG  
THE SYRIANS.—Renaudot, tom. ii.

*'The Priest. ' May thy Holy Spirit come down upon us and upon these gifts which we have presented, and may he sanctify them ; and make this bread, the glorious BODY of our Lord Jesus Christ, the heavenly body, the life-giving body, the precious body for the expiation of faults and the remission of sins, and eternal life, to those who receive it.*

*'The People. Amen.*

*'The Priest. And this chalice, the precious BLOOD of Jesus Christ, the Lord God, who has dominion over all things, the redeeming blood, the life-giving blood, the expiating blood, which was poured forth for the redemption and life of the world, for the expiation of faults, and the remission of sins, and eternal life to those who receive it.*

*'The People. Amen.'—Page 554.*

FROM THE LITURGY USED BY THE NESTORIANS,  
CALLED THE LITURGY OF THE HOLY APOSTLES.\*  
Renaudot, tom. ii.

*'The Priest breaks the Host which he holds in his hand, into two parts ; places that which is in his left hand on the*

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\* The Liturgy of the Holy Apostles is the ancient Liturgy of

*paten, and with the other, which he holds in his right hand, he makes a sign over the chalice, saying:—*The precious BLOOD is signed with the holy BODY of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

*‘ Then he dips it to the middle of the chalice, and with it signs the body, which is on the paten, saying:—*The holy BODY is signed with the propitiatory BLOOD of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

*‘ The Priest.* Christ our God, Lord, King, Saviour and giver of life, has graciously made us worthy to receive his body and his precious and sanctifying blood,’ &c.—*Pa. 596.*

FROM THE LITURGY OF NESTORIUS.—Renandot, *tom. ii.*

*‘ May the grace of the Holy Ghost come, and dwell, and rest on this oblation which we are offering before Thee; may He sanctify it, i. e. this bread and chalice, the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, Thou TRANS-MUTING them, and sanctifying them, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, that the receiving of these holy mysteries may avail all who receive them, unto eternal life, and resurrection from the dead, and expiation of bodies and souls, enlightening of knowledge, confidence before Thee, and everlasting salvation, &c. May we be worthy with a pure conscience to partake of the BODY and BLOOD of thy Christ,’ &c.—Pages 633, 634.*

*‘ Since we have externally received thy body, may thy virtue internally dwell in us. Grant that thy living BODY, O LORD, WHICH WE HAVE EATEN, and thy pure BLOOD*

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the Churches of Syria before Nestorius. In the Liturgy of Nestorius, which was the old Liturgy of the Church of Constantinople, that heresiarch has inserted his error in the Preface.



WHICH WE HAVE DRUNK, may not turn to our detriment, but to the expiation of our crimes, and the remission of our sins. O Lord of all,' &c.—*Page 634.*

FROM THE COPTIC LITURGY, USED BY THE JACOBITES, (OR EUTYCHIANS) CALLED THE LITURGY OF ST. BASIL.\*—*Renaudot, tom. i.*

*' The Priest shall say the invocation :—*

*' We beseech thee, O Christ our God, that thy Holy Spirit may come down upon us, and upon these gifts and offerings, and may sanctify them, and make them thy holy of holies.*

*' People. Amen.*

*' The Priest raising his voice :—And may he make indeed this bread, (he shall make the sign of the Cross thrice over the bread) the holy body of the same Lord our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, which is given for the remission of sins, and eternal life, to him who shall partake of it.*

*' People. Amen.*

*' The Priest shall make the sign of the Cross thrice over the chalice, and shall say :—And this chalice, the precious blood of thy New Testament, of the same Lord our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, which is given for the remission of sins and life everlasting to those who shall partake of it.*

*' People. Amen.*

*' Priest. We pray (God the Father) to make us worthy of the communion and participation of his divine and immortal mysteries, the holy BODY and precious BLOOD of his Christ. People. Amen.*

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\* The Liturgies of St. Basil, of St. Gregory, and of St. Cyril, were in common use among the Jacobites in Egypt, so called from James the Syrian, (who died in 557) one of the Eutychian leaders who rejected the Council of Calcedon, and taught that there is only one nature in Christ.

*'The Priest elevates the Despoticon (or larger part of the consecrated Host), bows down, and says with a loud voice:—Holy things for holy people. All the people prostrate themselves with their faces to the ground. The Priest holding his right hand elevated with three parts of the consecrated Host in it, says:—The holy BODY, and precious, pure, TRUE BLOOD of Jesus Christ the Son, our God. Amen. The body and blood of Emmanuel our God, This is in real truth. Amen. I believe, I believe, I believe and confess to the last breath of my life, that this is the life-giving body of thine only begotten Son, our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ. He received it from the Lady of us all, the Mother of God, the sacred and holy Mary.'*  
—Page 23.

FROM THE ALEXANDRIAN LITURGY OF ST. BASIL.

Renaudot, tom. i.

*'After elevating the larger part of the consecrated Host, the Priest says the Confession of Faith:—The holy BODY and precious BLOOD of Jesus Christ the Son of God. Amen.*

*'People. Amen.*

*'The holy, precious BODY, and true BLOOD of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Amen.*

*'People. Amen.*

*'I believe, I believe, I believe and confess till my last breath that it is the very life-giving FLESH of thy only begotten Son, our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ. He took it of our holy Lady, Mother of God, and ever Virgin Mary,' &c.—Page 83.*

## APPENDIX II.

*Extracts from the Liturgies referred to at p. 357, showing the unanimity of all the Oriental Liturgies in the invocation of the saints departed.*

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FROM THE LITURGY OF ST. JAMES.—*Renaudot, tom ii.*

‘ *Deacon. The memorial of saints.* Again and again we commemorate the truly happy, and praised by all the generations of the earth, the holy, blessed, ever Virgin Mary, the Mother of God; and at the same time we celebrate the memory of the prophets, apostles, evangelists, preachers, martyrs, and confessors.

‘ *The Priest raising his voice, says:*—Place us by thy grace amongst thy elect, who are written in heaven. Wherefore we celebrate their memory, that whilst they are standing before thy throne, they may be mindful of our poverty and weakness, and may, together with us, offer to thee this tremendous and unbloody sacrifice, for the protection of the living, for the consolation of the weak and unworthy, such as we are, for the repose and good name of those who have already departed in the true faith, our fathers, our brothers, and our masters, through the grace and mercy,’ &c.

‘ *People. Amen.*’

FROM THE LITURGY OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM.

*Goar, Euchologium Græcorum.*

‘ *Priest.* By the intercession of the most holy, immaculate, blessed, above all, our glorious Lady, Mother of God, and ever Virgin Mary, by the virtue of the glorious

and vivifying Cross, and of all the saints, may Christ our true God, have mercy on us, as a God of goodness and clemency.

‘*Choir. Amen.*’—Page 63.

‘*Priest.* We also offer to thee this rational service, for the sake of those who repose in Christ—the prophets, apostles, martyrs.—*Raising his voice.* Particularly the most holy, pure, blessed above all, our glorious Queen, the Mother of God, and ever Virgin Mary.

‘*The Choir sings.* It is truly meet to praise thee, Mother of God, who art always to be blessed, and art free from all sin, who art the mother of our God, to be venerated above the cherubim, and incomparably more glorious than the seraphim, who in all purity didst bring forth God the Word; we magnify thee who art truly the mother of God. Protect us, O God, by the prayers of St. John the Prophet, Precursor and Baptist, of Saint N., whose memory we celebrate, and of all the saints; and be mindful of all, who have slept before us in the hope of the resurrection to eternal life.’

FROM THE LITURGY USED BY THE NESTORIANS,  
CALLED THE LITURGY OF THE HOLY APOSTLES.

Renaudot, tom. ii.

‘*The Priest says this prayer in secret.* Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, pray for me to the only begotten Son, who was born of thee, that he may forgive me my offences and my sins, and may receive from my weak and sinful hands this sacrifice, which in my weakness, I offer on this altar, through thy intercession for me, O holy Mother.’—Page 588.

FROM THE LITURGY OF NESTORIUS.—Renaudot, t. ii.

‘*Priest giving the blessing.* May he, (the King of kings

and Lord of lords) bless this congregation, and preserve us; may he heal our wounds, and cleanse our consciences; may he instil the dew of his grace and mercy on our souls; may he establish tranquillity and peace amongst us; may we be sealed up and guarded by the living sign of the cross, against all evils, by the prayer of our Lord, the blessed Mary, and by the prayer of all the saints of our Lord, who have pleased him, and who please him now and for ever.'—*Page 635.*

'*Prayer on Festivals.* May Saint D. N. who is glorious in the assembly of the saints, preserve you from ill fortune, from devils and wicked men. May he pray for this weak, poor, and unworthy congregation of those who are still his disciples, that they may be preserved from all trouble.'—*Page 637.*

FROM THE COPTIC LITURGY, USED BY THE JACOBITES (OR EUTYCHIANS), CALLED THE LITURGY OF ST. GREGORY.—Renaudot, *tom. i.*

'*Priest.* Vouchsafe, O Lord, to be mindful of all the saints who have pleased thee from the beginning, of our holy fathers,....and of all the spirits of the just, who being made perfect, are departed in the faith; but principally, of the holy, glorious, ever Virgin Mother of God, holy Mary, and of St. John,....and of the whole choir of thy saints, by whose prayers and intercessions have mercy on us all, for the sake of thy holy name which is invoked upon us.'—*Pages 33, 34.*

FROM THE COPTIC LITURGY USED BY THE JACOBITES (OR EUTYCHIANS), CALLED THE LITURGY OF ST. CYRIL.—Renaudot, *tom. i.*

'*Priest.* We, O Lord, are not worthy to offer prayers for these blessed souls; but whereas they are standing

before the throne of thy only begotten Son, may they intercede for us, poor and infirm as we are. Forgive our iniquities, for the sake of their prayers, and for the sake of thy blessed name, which is invoked upon us.'—*Pages 41, 42.*

*Fragment of an Anglo-Saxon Litany contained in a manuscript of the tenth century, which once belonged to the monastery of St. Edmund in Suffolk, and is now preserved in the Vatican, amongst the MSS. of Queen Christina of Sweden, and was lately published by Monsignor Mai, in his 'Scriptorum Veterum Nova Collectio,' t. v. p. 68.*

*Ex Litaniis Anglo-Saxonis fragmentum pervetus.*

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|---------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|
| Sc̅e Eadmund̅e ·II· | or. | Sc̅e Byrine        | or. |
| Sc̅e Eadwarde       | or. | Sc̅e Botulfe ·II·  | or. |
| Sc̅e Aethelbyrhte   | or. | Sc̅e Hiurmine ·II· | or. |
| Sc̅e Albane         | or. | Sc̅e Guthlace      | or. |
| Sc̅e Kynelme        | or. | Sc̅e Dunstane      | or. |
| Sc̅e Cuthberhte     | or. | Sc̅e Eorconwolde   | or. |
| Sc̅e Athelwolde     | or. | Sca Aetheldrytha   | or. |
| Sc̅e Oswolde        | or. | Sca Wihtburh       | or. |
| Sc̅e Swithune       | or. | Sca Sexburh        | or. |
| Sc̅e Iudoce         | or. | Sca Eormenhyld     | or. |
| Sc̅e Grimbalde      | or. | Sca Eadburh        | or. |
| Sc̅e Maechu         | or. | Sca Aethelburh     | or. |
| Sc̅e Hyue           | or. | Sca Aelsgyfu       | or. |
| Sca Brigida         | or. | Sca Toua           | or. |
| Sca Helena          | or. | Sca Mildrytha      | or. |

## APPENDIX III.

VINDICATION OF THE CATHOLIC CANON  
OF SCRIPTURE.

As in the preceding pages, some amongst those books which are erroneously enumerated as apocryphal by Protestants, have been quoted with equal reverence as those other portions of the sacred volume which are recognized by all to be the genuine word of God; perhaps it may be useful to offer to the reader's consideration the following remarks upon the Catholic canon of the holy Scriptures.

Protestants object that the book of Tobias, the first and second books of Machabees, with several other portions of Scripture, are apocryphal; and that the Church of England\* 'doth read them for example of life and instruction of manners, but yet doth not apply them to establish any doctrine.' To this the Catholic will reply, in the words of the 20th of the 39 Articles, that the 'Church hath authority in controversies of Faith;' and has decided, by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, that all these books are divinely inspired—canonical Scripture; and, consequently, may be employed, as well as any other portion of the holy Bible, 'to establish any doctrine.' Moreover, the Catholic will pass some observations on that article of the English established Church, by which she declares that;—'In the name of the holy Scripture, we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the

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\* See the 6th of the 39 Articles.

Church.\* Against this Protestant rule for determining what is, and what is not sacred Scripture, the Catholic will advance the following objections. He will observe, in the first place, that it is a fallacious and erroneous one. In the second place, he will prove that the Church of England has, in a variety of instances, most notoriously abandoned that very rule which she so solemnly and formally insists upon. 1. That such a rule is fallacious and erroneous, is evident. The bloody persecutions inflicted on the Church, during the first three centuries, prohibited a free communication between her numerous and widely separated members. The privation of such a correspondence rendered doubts entertained by a portion of the Church in Gaul, or Spain, for instance, concerning an epistle of Scripture, which was written in Greece, or Asia, or any book of the Old Testament venerated as the word of God in the Churches there, unavoidable. It was only when peace had been given to the faithful, that the pastors of the Church, could congregate from every corner of the earth; and going up to a general council, compare, with one another, the Gospel which they had preached to their respective flocks; and there investigating, by the guidance of the Holy Ghost, minutely step by step, that tradition which brought down any controverted book of Scripture as the produce of that holy Spirit, trace up, with undeviating certitude, its genuineness and canonicity to its real and undoubted origin; and authoritatively decide it to have emanated from the pen of a divinely inspired and apostolic author. Hence it will appear, that, though the book had been doubtful, and had not, in consequence, been inserted in the Scripture-canon; immediately such a doubt had been removed, it might be securely enrolled

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\* 6th of the 39 Articles.



amongst the sacred books; and without the slightest fear or hesitation, be considered as the genuine and divinely inspired word of God. We may well conceive that a variety of circumstances could have combined to prevent the apostolical tradition relating to any particular book from being widely or generally diffused. If those, therefore, who could not possibly know the reasons which established the inspiration of the book, should, through such an ignorance, doubt of its canonicity, it will be impossible to imagine why such a doubt should, after it had been sufficiently dissipated, prevent the book from being recognized as Scripture. The book of the Apocalypse is an instance in point. The Council of Laodicea, held in the year 361, would not inscribe the Apocalypse in its canon; but as soon as the tradition in its favour became more minutely ascertained, the third Council of Carthage, celebrated about 30 years later, acknowledged it to be genuine Scripture. The Councils subsequently held at Rome, at Florence, and at Trent, have reiterated the recognition; yet this book should, according to the principles laid down in the 6th Article of the Protestant Church, be unhesitatingly rejected, since doubts *have* been entertained concerning its canonicity. Such a rule, therefore, is fallacious and absurd.

2. The English Protestant Church, has, in various instances, most flagrantly violated that rule, which she herself promulgated for determining what is the genuine word of God; for she has recognized as Scripture many entire books, and parts of others, whose genuineness has been long and seriously debated in the Church. The historian Eusebius,\* St. Athanasius,† and St. Gregory Nazianzen,‡ not merely express their doubts of such por-

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\* *Book 4, c. xxvi.*

† *Epis. xxxix.*

‡ *Carm. xxxiii.*

tions of the book of Esther, which the Anglicans admit, but have cancelled the whole of that history from their catalogues. With regard to the New Testament, it is a fact of common notoriety that, of the epistles, the second of St. Peter's, a part of the first, and all the second and third of St. John's, the whole of St. James's, and of St. Jude's, the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews, and the Apocalypse, together with the last chapter of St. Mark, the history of the bloody sweat in the twenty-second chapter of St. Luke, and the story of the woman taken in adultery, noticed in the eighth chapter of St. John, have been repeatedly doubted of in the Church; still, the Church of England admits every one of them to be divinely inspired Scripture. With this well authenticated fact before her eyes, yet she asserts in her Articles that—'By Scripture is to be understood those canonical books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church.' The truth is, in determining what should be accounted by her followers as Scripture, the Protestant Church, established in England, consulted her own caprice, or rather the most expedient way of upholding her novelties in doctrine, instead of either interrogating ecclesiastical history, or appealing to the decisions of the ancient Church; for she cannot direct us to one single ancient authority, much less point out one solitary Council, with which she coincides in every respect, concerning her canon of the Scriptures. The books which the Catholic Church at the present day admits, are precisely those which were declared canonical by the third Council of Carthage, more than fourteen hundred years ago.

#### OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

Against the book of Tobias, which was quoted to esta-

blish the invocation of angels; and against those of the Machabees, the second of which is produced as an authority for praying for the dead; and indeed against all the others of the Old Testament improperly called Apocrypha, Protestants advance the following objections.

1st. That they were not inserted in the Canon of the Jews. It is not ascertained at what precise period the Jewish Canon of Scripture was drawn up, though, by almost universal consent, Esdras is admitted to have been its author. That Esdras did not, could not, enumerate the books which Protestants consider as apocryphal, is evident; since it is certain that some, and highly probable that all, of them, were not written until after the death of that zealous Israelite. But abstracting from this fact, undoubtedly the Apostles, delegated by Jesus Christ to teach all nations, all truths, were invested with quite as much authority as Esdras and the synagogue; assuredly the Church of Christ exhibits many more titles to our confidence, and possesses a higher claim to our obedience than the Church of Moses, and the Jewish Councils. We may, therefore, justly remark with Origen:—‘Though the Church of the Jews place those books among the Apocrypha, the Church of Christ teaches them and honours them as divine.’ Protestants affect to despise tradition, and yet they tenaciously adhere to the Jewish tradition concerning the Canon of Scripture, arranged by Esdras in such a way, that the number of books should amount to twenty-two,—the number of letters in the Jewish alphabet; and that each book should be designated by its numerical letter, as we gather from St. Jerom. Protestants admit tradition as a sufficient authority to determine what books are the divinely inspired word of God; but though they suffer tradition to be the arbitress in deciding on a portion of their faith, a moment after they refuse to

listen to this same tradition, while she declares that there are other books which are divinely inspired. Catholics do not entangle themselves in such a difficulty. While they assert divine tradition\* to be imperative, they refuse

\* As tradition on the unwritten word of God, constitutes one of the questions that are continually agitated between Catholics and Protestants, it will not be impertinent to the present subject, if a passing view be taken of it.

The term 'Tradition' is employed to signify the word of God not written in the Canon of Scripture, though it may be read in the Canons of Councils, and works of the holy Fathers. The most ancient ecclesiastical writers made this distinction. St. Irenæus, (*Lib. iii. c. 2.*) in the second century, while upbraiding certain heretics of those days, remarks that they agree neither with Scripture nor Tradition. Tertullian, in his book on '*the soldier's crown*,' observes :—' If you seek to find a law for this, you will find no Scripture, but tradition is the authority which presents itself to you : ' and St. Cyprian says ; (*Lib. ii. Epis. 3.*)—' You should know that we have been admonished how, in offering the chalice of the Lord, the tradition of the Lord is to be observed, so that the chalice which we offer in commemoration of him, should be offered mixed with wine ; ' that is, wine and water mingled should be used at the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the Mass. It would be easy, though useless, to accumulate a thousand other testimonies.

Tradition is denominated the word of God, or a doctrine not written ; not because it has never been committed to any kind of writing, but because it was not penned by its first author or promulgator. Infant baptism is an apposite example. The doctrine which allows the baptism of infants, is called an apostolic tradition, and unwritten, because no vestige of it can be traced in any of the apostolic writings, although it is discernible in almost every book that claims one of the ancient Fathers for its author.

Tradition is divided into divine, apostolical, and ecclesiastical. Those are esteemed as divine which have been received from the lips of Christ himself while teaching his apostles ; and are no where

to recognize, in what is purely human, any other power of demanding their assent, than what belongs to it as such :

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found recorded on the sacred pages. Of this description are those traditions which regard the matter and the form of the Seven Sacraments, as well as the septenary number of the sacraments themselves. On these points we read very little in the Scriptures, and yet it is certain that no one but Christ himself could have either elevated a ceremony to the dignity of a sacrament, or could have severally defined what should be the essence of each particular one of them. Hence the apostle observes to the Corinthians; (1 *Cor.* c. xi. 23.) 'For I have received that which also I delivered unto you.'

Apostolical traditions, accurately speaking, are those which were instituted by the Apostles, not however without the inspiration, and especial assistance of the Holy Ghost, though indeed we do not find them mentioned in any of their epistles. Of this class are the fast of Lent; infant-baptism; baptism by aspersion; (for the genuine meaning of the word 'baptize,' is to immerse or dip) the change in the observance of the Sabbath; the inspiration and canon of the Scriptures, &c. all of which, if we follow the rule laid down by St. Augustin, (*De Bap. contra Donatistat. Lib. iv. c. 24*) 'that which the Church observes, and what is not decreed by Councils, but always retained, is of Apostolic origin,' we must attribute to the Apostles.

By a kind of interchange in language, it not unfrequently happens that divine are called apostolical, and apostolical, divine traditions. Divine traditions are denominated Apostolic, not because they deduce their origin from the Apostles, but because the Church became acquainted with, and received such traditions, first of all, through them to whom they had been immediately delivered by Christ himself; and Apostolic ones are termed divine, not because ordained by them, but because the Apostles had been moved by his Holy Spirit to promulgate them. In this manner, all the Epistles of the Apostles are included under the denomination of divine and apostolic writing. Though certain precepts and injunctions insisted on in these

but they listen with confident docility to Jesus Christ and his apostles, who, as they are convinced by the unvaried and unanimous declarations, and the authoritative decisions of an infallible Church, delivered to them as the genuine word of God, those very books which Protestants denominate Apocryphal.

2nd. Protestants endeavour to elicit internal evidence against some of those books, and allege imaginary contradictions, or the nature of some moral principles, which they erroneously suppose they have detected in them. Such was the precise line followed by the Manichæans. Those heretics objected that many portions of the Bible afforded unbecoming notions of the Deity, who was represented there as a corporeal being, subject to the same emotions of anger, jealousy, and revenge, that agitate the bosom of created man. They also observed that the law, which in reality existed in nature anterior to the promulgation of the Decalogue by Moses, was disfigured by threats and temporal and earthly promises, highly unbecoming a God of love, and a spiritual and celestial ruler. They animadverted on the scandalous conduct and the pernicious example which some amongst the patriarchs exhibited in their actions. They stigmatized the Jewish ceremonial, prescribed in the ancient Testament, as gross,

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Epistles, are properly divine ; certain others are properly apostolical, as is evident from St. Paul ; (*1 Cor. c. vii. v. 10.*) ‘ And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord ;’ and just after : (*v. 12.*) ‘ But to the rest speak I, not the Lord.’

Ecclesiastical traditions are those ancient ordinances and usages which were originally introduced by the pastors of the Church, or commenced amongst the people ; and being gradually brought into universal practice, have acquired the authority of law, by the tacit approbation of the christian world.

and loaded with absurdity ; and animadverted on one religious rite observed amongst the Hebrew nation, as highly indecorous. That such exceptions of those heretics were nothing more than idle cavils, is evident ; and they have been as ably answered by Protestants themselves, as by Catholic vindicators of the holy volume.

The same observations, however, which Protestants have corroborated, with so much force of language, and weight of argument, in defence of the Scriptures, while refuting the obloquy of the heretic and infidel, may be rebutted with triple energy by the Catholic against those objections, which the Protestant turns about and raises concerning those portions of the Bible which the Catholic receives as the divinely inspired word of God, but which the English Establishment enumerates in her canon as apocryphal. The Protestant would say to the Manichæan :—" If the Scriptures mention any moral turpitude, it is not to applaud, but merely to relate it as a fact of history. The Catholic, in like manner, replies to the objection of the Protestant,—who argues that the book of Machabees cannot be inspired, since it seems to approve of self-destruction—that the inspired author of that book did not wish to laud the deed of Razias, who fell upon his sword, and then precipitated himself from the wall of his house, and afterwards tore out his own bowels, lest he should fall into the hands of the wicked, and suffer abuses unbecoming his noble birth ; but intended only to recount the fact as it happened ; and to notice the opinion of those who were witnesses of this transaction, and considered, in their way of thinking, that this patriotic Israelite had conducted himself with manly courage, and devoted heroism. In the second place, any objection against that portion of Scripture, miscalled Apocrypha, as in this instance of the book of Machabees, because it seems to countenance a violation

of moral or religious conduct, can never be preferred, except with the most glaring inconsistency, by Protestants; since, as they explicitly affirm in the 6th of their thirty-nine Articles,—‘The Church doth read them (the Apocrypha, and the second book of Machabees among the rest) for example of life and instruction of manners.’”

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## APPENDIX IV.

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### THE CATACOMBS.

THOSE subterranean chambers and corridors that are now usually denominated Catacombs, and in which the early Christians were accustomed to seek refuge in the times of persecution,\* have been so repeatedly referred to in various parts of this work, that it cannot be deemed out of place to offer some short notice of them, at least to such as are studious of ecclesiastical antiquities.

To the Italian traveller, and to those especially who have examined the ruins of ancient Rome, or visited the classic shores of Naples, and its enchanting environs, the fame of the ancient cement, made from a ferruginous sand of volcanic production, called Pozzolana, must be well known. Not only the site of Rome itself, but the whole circumjacent campagna abounds in Pozzolana, and in a light hard substance, called by the Italians “tufo.” To procure these materials on the spot, or at the least possible distance, for the construction of their gigantic edi-

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\* There were twelve general persecutions of the Church.



fices; and, at the same time, not to break up and spoil the surface of the ground, but to reserve it for building or for ornamental cultivation, the Romans opened excavations in a way very much resembling our mode of working coal-mines in England. They sank shafts of some depth, whence they extracted the pozzolana and the tufo.\* Many of these shafts still remain unclosed, and visible in various parts of the ground, in the more immediate neighbourhood of Rome; nor have they escaped the notice of ancient writers.† The ancients selected and exhausted the most copious veins, or rather strata of the sand, which they wrought in such a manner, that the excavation, by the number of its wide and narrow galleries and passages which sometimes diverged from, and at other times intersected one another, very much resembled a subterranean city with its streets and alleys; and still recalls to our remembrance what ancient authors have written, and modern travellers have verified, concerning the appearance of the Cretan, and other classic labyrinths. That these subterranean corridors were commenced by the ancient Romans, and the greater part of them the work of

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\* To us, this may seem a difficult and tedious process for procuring stone and mortar; but it should be borne in mind, that the Romans, by the number of their slaves, could accomplish with dispatch and facility many operations which, in a nation amongst whom slavery is not tolerated, would be beset with insurmountable difficulties and trouble.

† Prudentius notices them in the description which he gives of the entrance into the cemeteries.

Inde, ubi progressu facili nigrescere visa est  
 Nox obscura, loci per specus ambigium,  
 Occurrunt cæsis immissa foramina tectis,  
 Quæ jaciunt claros antra super radios.

*Perist. Hymn. xi. V. 159.*

that people, anterior to the preaching of the Gospel, is certain ; though it is equally well attested that they were arranged, enlarged, and rendered available to the several purposes of sepulture—of religious worship—and of occasional residence, by the persecuted Christians.

The term Catacomb, however, is their Christian, not their classic appellation. We find no traces of such a name anterior to the fourth century. At first, it was applied merely to the subterranean tombs immediately about the basilical church of St. Sebastian on the Appian Way, but as the other cemeteries became less frequented, with the exception of the one of which the entrance was from this church, the name of Catacomb was gradually extended, from this circumstance, to signify not an individual one, but all the cemeteries about Rome, and, eventually, every similar excavation in other parts of Europe.\* By pagan writers they are denominated *Arenariæ cryptæ*, or simply *Arenaria*. The notice which Cicero takes of the assassination of one Asinius in these *Arenaria*,† not only establishes the fact of their having been excavated during the times of the Republic, but also of their being lonely and unfrequented places. It was to these dark recesses that Nero was recommended to fly for refuge, when pursued by the soldiers of Galba, who sought his life. But, according to Suetonius, the emperor replied to his adviser Phaon, that, as long as he was alive, he would never go

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\* The word Catacomb is compounded of a Greek preposition and substantive,—*κατα*, and *κυμβος*. *Cumbos* has the same signification with crypt, or hollow ; *Cata cumbas*, or *ad cumbas*, would therefore mean the same thing, as, ‘ at the crypts or subterranean tombs.’

† *Asinius autem brevi illo tempore quasi in hortulos iret, in Arenarias quasdam extra portam Esquilinam perductus occiditur. Cicero, in Orat. pro Cluentio. N. 13.*

under ground.\* By the early Christian writers they are called *Arææ*, *Arææ Sepulchrarum*, *Cryptæ*, *Concilia martyrum*, and *Cœmiteria*.†

No place could be better calculated to answer all the purposes of the primitive and persecuted Christians than these subterranean caverns. Here they might consign to the sepulchre the mortal remains of their brethren in the faith, certain of not commingling their dust with the ashes of their Gentile fellow-citizens. Here they might deposite, with all possible respect the mangled bodies of those amongst their venerated teachers and heroic brethren, who had sealed their faith with martyrdom. Hither they could come, in compliance with the instructions of their apostolic teachers, to ask the prayers of those saints, as they knelt at the foot of the altars which were erected over their tombs, and on which the holy sacrifice of the mass was celebrated. Here, too, they promised themselves a grave, wherein their bones would repose, respectfully distant from the sepulchres of those martyrs, yet still within their neighbourhood, with the emblems of their belief in Jesus affixed over them, to arrest each brother in the faith, and bid him pray the prayer of peace for their departed spirit. Here they could assemble on the sabbath-day, to solemnize and partake of the holy Eucha-

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\* Ibi hortante eodem Phaonte, ut interim in specum egestæ arenæ concederet, negavit se vivum sub terram iturum.—*Sueton. in Neron. c. 48.*

† Cemetery is derived from the Greck, and means a dormitory or sleeping-room. Such an appellation was appropriately given by the early Christians to their places of sepulture, in conformity with their belief in the resurrection of the flesh; whence they regarded the tomb but as a place of temporary sleep, from out of which the body would rise again.—*St. Chrys. Hom. lxxxi. tom. 5.*

ristic sacrifice, in comparative security from the sudden intrusion of their persecutors, and unapprehensive of derision from the pagan scoffer. Here, in fine, they possessed a refuge in the day of fiery trial, and worshipped the one true God, in spirit and in truth, according to the dictates of their conscience.

That the Catacombs have, at the same time, served these three purposes, of being a place of sepulchre for the martyrs and the rest of the faithful ;—of assembly for the exercise of religion, in particular for the celebration of mass ;—and of refuge during the seasons of persecution, is a well authenticated fact.

In support of the first of these assertions, nothing can be clearer than that the Catacombs were appropriated, at some distant period or another, as a place of burial. This is demonstrated by a variety of proofs. It is incontrovertible that these Catacombs exhibit thousands of graves in which are discovered human bodies. It is equally certain that innumerable tombs which have never been disturbed, still exist in these ancient cemeteries. Three questions now naturally present themselves for solution. 1st. To what division of the inhabitants of ancient Rome do these mortal remains that have been discovered belong—to the Christian or the pagan portion of citizens, or to a mixture of both? 2nd. At what epoch did the Christians commence to inter their brethren, especially the martyrs, in the Catacombs? 3rd. If they must be assigned, exclusively, to the Christian part of the population, how can the grave of a martyr-saint be distinguished from that of the other less holy and less heroic Christians who lie buried there?

In answer to the first of these queries, it may be replied, that nothing can be more evident than that the remains of the dead discovered in the Roman Catacombs, belong

exclusively to the Christian citizens of ancient Rome. This is demonstrated by several arguments. In the first place, it is a well-established fact in the history of Roman manners, that as early as four centuries and a half previous to the Christian era, the custom of burning the bodies of the dead, prevailed at Rome;\* and that the only exception to such a practice, which was in the Cornelian family, ceased at the death of the chief of it, the Dictator Sylla, who ordered his body to be burned,—an example that was imitated by the rest of his tribe, who afterwards complied with the universal custom.† A long time, therefore, previous to the birth of our divine Redeemer, and consequently many years before the preaching of his religion at Rome, the custom was established in that city of burning the bodies of the dead, rich and poor;‡ and it was

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\* There was an enactment to this effect in the laws of the twelve tables, (*Cicero de Leg. lib. ii. in fine*) which were framed in the year 300 after the foundation of the city, that is, 450 years before the birth of our Redeemer.

† *Cicero, de Leg. lib. ii.*

‡ That the remains of the poor were burned, as well as those of the rich, we collect from a variety of testimonies. Terentius, the dramatic writer, has thrown the customs of his times and country into his plays. In one of these, he introduces Cresida in the character of a poor female, compelled by distress to abandon her country, and to relieve her misery by spinning wool.

Parce et duriter

Agebat lana ac tela victum quæritans.

*And. Act. i. Scene 1.*

After the death of this poverty-stricken female, he describes her being borne to the funeral-pyre, and the burning of her corpse, in the following manner :

not until the demise of Constantine, whose corpse, instead of being burned, in conformity to the practice which had hitherto been invariably observed, was inhumed, that this custom commenced to be abandoned by the Pagan subjects of the Roman empire. The exception of not burning, but burying, the bodies of infants who departed this life before they had cut their teeth,\* and of those individuals who had been scathed by lightning,† proves the observance of the general rule of burning the bodies of all such dead as did not come within its limits. In the second place, it must be observed that the Christians, on the contrary, were very particular in following, on this point, the practice of the Jews; and, like them, invariably buried, and would on no account burn, the bodies of their deceased brethren. Their belief in the resurrection of the flesh, and the consequent idea that the bodies of the righteous, after death, were reposing, as it were, in a peaceful transitory slumber,‡ was one amongst other mo-

Funus interim

Procedit: sequimur: ad sepulchrum venimus: in ignem posita est.

*Ibid.*

Martialis observes that the corpses of the poorest people were burned; but it was in heaps, and not singly, like those of more substantial citizens:

Quattuor inscripti portabant vile cadaver

Accipit infelix qualia mille rogos.

*Martial. lib. viii. Epig. 75.*

\* Pliny, vii. 15; Juvenal, xv. 140. The place in which such children were interred, was denominated 'Suggrundarium.'—*Fulgent. de Pres. Serm. 7.*

† Plin. ii. 55; Senec. *de Ir.* iii. 23. The spot was called 'Bidental,' because consecrated by a sacrifice of sheep.—*Pers.* ii. 27.

‡ Hundreds of funeral-inscriptions, discovered on the graves of the martyrs in the cemeteries, might be noticed. 'Dormit dulcis

tives, which influenced them to consign their brethren to the tomb.

Such a wide departure from the universal practice, did not fail to attract the notice, and provoke the oburgations, of the Gentiles ; nor was it disavowed, but unhesitatingly acknowledged and defended by Tertullian, Minucius Felix, and other Christian writers.\* From this historical fact, that the pagan Romans burned the bodies of their dead, poor as well as rich, while, on the contrary, Christians everywhere buried in graves the corpses of their brethren, and from this reciprocity of dislike to be sepulchred together, we collect that those remains of the dead which have been discovered in the Catacombs, must belong, not to the Gentiles, but exclusively to true believers in the Gospel.†

Some Protestants have attempted, but in vain, to wres-

in Deo,'— 'Requiescit in Deo dulcis,'— 'In pace et in refrigerio,'— In somno pacis'—are expressions which perpetually occur.

\* Et cremabitur ex disciplina castrensi Christianus cui cremare non licuit ; cui Christus merita ignis indulsit. (*Tertul. de Corona*, c. xi.) Minucius Felix, in his admirable dialogue, introduces the defender of paganism as alleging the following accusation against Christians:— 'Inde videlicet et execrantur rogos et damnant ignium sepulturas : ' to which the champion of Christianity replies ; ' Nec, ut creditis, ullum damnum sepulturæ timemus ; sed et veterem et meliorem consuetudinem humandi frequentamus.

† How Eustace, with his knowledge of the Latin classics, could have, for a moment, conceived that 'such bodies as have been found in the Catacombs, without inscription, mark, or indication of name or profession, may have belonged to Pagans,' (*Classical Tour*, vol. ii. c. 3, p. 106, 8vo. edit. Leghorn, 1817) is difficult to conceive. Had that gentleman lived to retouch his elegant and learned work on Italy, he would have, no doubt, corrected several inaccuracies, and cancelled some passages which now deform it.

tle with this argument.\* They first endeavour to identify those pits which are called by the Latin classic authors *puticuli*, with those subterranean corridors or cemeteries that we more generally denominate Catacombs; and hence insinuate that the bodies of the poorer classes of pagan Romans, which are recorded by ancient writers to have been thrown into these *puticuli*, are intermingled with the bodies of the ancient Christians. The study of archæology has made, however, such advances, that no one who has become but slightly acquainted with the Latin classics, and the local antiquities of Rome, will have the hardihood to advance such an objection at the present day. 1st. We know, from the united testimonies of two ancient writers, Varro† and Festus,‡ that these *puticuli* were situated outside the Esquiline gate; whereas, every one who is acquainted with the topography of Rome, is aware that the cemeteries or Catacombs lie in every direction around that city. 2nd. From what has just been noticed, it is evident that the poorest plebeian's body was burned, before his ashes were cast into these *puticuli*. 3rd. Granting that the bodies of some slaves were borne at night, and thrown without the Esquiline gate, it is certain that to this particular place and to no other, such bodies were brought; and that they were cast there in such a manner, that beasts and birds of prey could come and feed upon them;§ whereas the bodies of Christians are found everywhere in the Catacombs, and discovered arranged in their separate niches, in great regularity, and with the most respectful care. 4th. The greatest horror

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\* Basnage, *l'Histoire de l'Eglise*; and Dr. Burnet, in his *Travels*, Letter iv.

† *Lib. iv.*

‡ In voce *puticuli*.

§ Horatius, *Epod. lib. Ode 5.*



and repugnance against having their remains commingled, were felt with mutual intensity by Christian and by Gentile. The latter considered that the greatest punishment which the gods in their wrath could inflict upon him, was to entomb him with one who was of a different country or religion ; and the true believer regarded the neighbourhood of a pagan's ashes to his grave, as a profanation.\* Hence they reciprocally endeavoured to secure for themselves a separate place of burial.

In this respect, moreover, the Christians of Rome were as exclusive and as studious to avoid all communication with the Jews, as they showed themselves in reference to the Gentiles. It is a fact, that up to the present period, neither Hebrew name, nor inscription, nor any thing exhibiting the slightest traces of the Hebrew style of character, has been discovered in the Christian cemeteries.† The Jews of ancient Rome, who inhabited, and had their synagogues in that part of the city which lies beyond the Tiber, possessed a burial-place of their own, near that region, out of the gate which is now called 'Porta Portese.' This Jewish cemetery was discovered by Bosio who found in it various tombs with inscriptions. On one of these was sculptured the seven-branched candlestick, and another of them, written in Greek, displayed the word *ΚΥΝΑΓΩΓΗ*, Synagogue.‡

II. We have now to ascertain the period at which the

\* One of the serious accusations urged by St. Cyprian, A.D. 258, against Martialis, was that he had been guilty of profanation, by entombing his children in a Gentile burial-place. 'Filios,' says that celebrated martyr, 'exterorum gentium more, apud profana sepulchra depositos et alienigenis consepultos.' *Cyp. Epis.* lxxviii.

† Boldetti, p.p. 330, 474.

‡ Aringhi, *Rom. Sott. tom. i. p. 396.*

Christians commenced to use these subterranean galleries as a place of sepulture.

That long before the times of St. Jerom, who was born very probably in the year 331, the Catacombs had been employed as a burial-place for the martyrs and the faithful in general, is evident from the accidental notice which that father takes of the cemeteries, as he informs us that while he was at Rome pursuing his studies in elegant literature, it was his custom to go about, on Sundays, with those of his own youthful age and occupation, from one cemetery to another, visiting the tombs of the Apostles and martyrs in their dark corridors, the walls of both sides of which exhibited to him the tombs of the dead arranged one above the other.\*

The inscriptions which have been discovered in these cemeteries will also furnish data to resolve the question. Many of them not only establish the fact that these Catacombs were used as burial-places for the martyrs, during the several persecutions endured by the Church, but determine the precise epoch when the martyrs' remains were deposited there.

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\* Dum essem Romæ puer, et liberalibus studiis erudirer, solebam cum cæteris ejusdem ætatis, et propositi, diebus dominicis sepulcra Apostolorum, et Martyrum circuire, crebroque cryptas ingredi, quæ in terrarum profunda defossæ ex utraque parte ingredientium per parietes habent corpora sepultorum, et ita obscura sunt omnia, ut propemodum propheticum illud compleatur: Descendunt ad infernum viventes; et raro desuper lumen admissum horrorem temperet tenebrarum, ut non tam fenestram, quam foramen dimissi luminis putes. Rursumque pedetentim acceditur, et cæca nocte circumdatis, illud Virgilianum proponitur: Horror ubique animos simul ipsa silentia terrent.—*St. Hieron. in c. xl. Ez.*

PRIMITIVUS IN PACE QUI POST MULTAS ANGSTIAS  
 FORTISSIMUS MARTIR **X** VIXIT ANNIS P. M.  
 XXXVIII. CONJUG. SUO PERDULCISSIMO  
 BENEMERENTI FECIT.\*

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PECORI DULCIS ANIMA BENIT IN CIMITERO VII IDUS  
 IUL. D. P. POSTERA DIE MARTUORU.†

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HIC RECONDITUM EST CORPUS ALMI LEVITÆ ET MAR-  
 TYRIS CYRIACI A MATRONA LUCINA RECONDITUM.‡

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RUFINUS ET CHRISTI MARTYRES  
 C. L. MARTYRES CHRISTI.§

Several of the inscriptions which have been discovered affixed to the sepulchral niches pierced in the walls of the cemeteries, and containing the body of the Christian champion, with the vial of blood placed at his head, are highly valuable. One of them informs us of the burial of the martyred soldier Marius, during the reign of the emperor Hadrianus ;||—

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\* This inscription was found in the Ostrian cemetery, which is on the Salarian way. The Ostorian family, a member of which gave name to this branch of the Catacombs, was one of the most illustrious in Rome, and is frequently mentioned by Tacitus and Tertullian. Tradition points out these subterranean chambers as one of the places to which St. Peter resorted for the purpose of administering baptism to the converted Gentiles. See Boldetti, p. 88, who gives this inscription, as well as M. Mai. *Veter. Scrip. Nova Collec. tom. v. p. 400.*

† From the cemetery of SS. Processus and Martinianus, on the Aurelian way.—Mai, *Script. Vet. Nova Collectio, tom. v. p. 396.*

‡ From the cemetery of Cyriaca.—Mai, *ibid. p. 373.*

§ From the cemetery of St. Ermetes.—Boldetti, p. 233.

|| A.D. 117.

TEMPORE ADRIANI IMPERATORIS MARIUS ADOLESCENS  
 DUX MILITUM QUI SATIS VIXIT DUM VITAM PRO CHO  
 CUM SANGUINE CONSUNSAT IN PACE TANDEM QUIEVIT  
 BENEMERENTES CUM LACRIMIS ET METU  
 POSUERUNT. I. D. VI.\*

another refers to the consulship of Surra and Senecio,  
 which took place in the year 107;—

N XXX SURRA ET SENEC. COSS.†

and a third descends as low as the time of Vespasianus,‡  
 that is, not forty years after the crucifixion.

VCVESPASIANO III COS IAN §

To somewhere about this epoch may be referred another  
 valuable inscription on which the name and the ingrati-  
 tude of Vespasianus towards an architect who had ren-  
 dered his reign illustrious by the erection of a theatre,  
 but was afterwards put to death by order of that emperor  
 on account of a belief in Christianity.||

\* This inscription was found in the cemetery of St. Ermetes.—  
 Boldetti, *p.* 233.—Mai, *Veter. Scrip. Nov. Collect.* *p.* 391.

† This inscription was scratched in the mortar which overspread  
 the mouth of the niche.—Boldetti, *p.* 79.

‡ A.D. 69.

§ This inscription is incrustated in the wall of the first corridor in  
 the Vatican museum, where it was placed by Marini.

|| A distinguished writer in ecclesiastical antiquities, Marangoni,  
 who was one of the literary ornaments of Rome at the commence-  
 ment of the eighteenth century, conjectures, from the context of  
 this inscription, that the theatre so made mention of, is no other  
 than the stupendous Colosseum, the architect of which was Gau-  
 dentius, who having contributed to the glory of the capital of the  
 world by the erection of that gigantic, though certainly not correct

SIC PREMIA SERVAS VESPASIANE DIRE      PREMIATVS ES MORTE GAUDENTIETARE  
 CIVIT ASVBIGLORIETVEAVTORI      PROMISIT ISTE DAT KRISTUS OMNIA TIBI  
 QVI ALIUM PARAVIT TEATRV INCELO

These inscriptions completely overthrow the gratuitous insinuation, or rather calumny, of Burnet, who pretends to doubt whether, previous to the fourth and fifth centuries, the Catacombs were employed as a burial-place by the Christians.\*

Precisely the same customs respecting the choice of subterranean chambers, distinct from the sepulchres of their unbelieving fellow-citizens, and the mode of depositing their dead in niches pierced in the sides of these caverns one above another, were, as far as circumstances would permit, exactly imitated by the rest of the faithful scattered through the cities of the Roman empire. At Nepi, a town in the neighbourhood of Rome, was discovered in 1540 a natural grotto which had been converted into a cemetery or catacomb, for the burial of the first

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nor elegant edifice, was rewarded with the martyr's crown by Vespasian. The train of reasoning, and the arguments by which Marangoni labours to fortify his supposition, if they do not amount to demonstration, are at least strongly presumptive, and by no means to be despised. (See Marangoni, *Memorie sacre e profane dell' Anfiteatro Flavio*.)

This inscription was discovered in the cemetery of St. Agnes *fuori delle mura*, and is at present affixed to the walls of the subterranean oratory under the church of St. Martina, in the Roman Forum.

Of the stroke-like accents in the place of dots over the letter i, it should be observed that such a method of writing began to appear in the inscriptions of the time of Augustus, and continued in use up to the era of the Antonini, when they ceased to be employed.—Marini, *Atti de' Frat. Arval.* p. 760. ✎

\* Burnet's *Travels*, Letter iv. p. 170.

inhabitants of that place who embraced the Gospel. The graves were excavated in the walls, which were of tufo, precisely as they are in the Roman cemeteries, and amounted to the number of nearly six hundred, amongst which thirty-eight were ascertained to be the tombs of as many martyrs; over one of whom was placed the following inscription.

MARCULUS CIVIS NEPESINUS HAC DIE XXII. JULII  
MARTYRIO CORONATUS CAPITE TRUNCATUS JACET  
QUEM EGO SAVINILLA JESU CHRISTI ANCILLA  
PROPRIIS MANIBUS SEPELIVI.\*

III. It is now time for us to pass on to the third question for solution, and ascertain how the saints' and martyrs' tombs may be distinguished from the graves of the less perfect and less heroic crowd of Christians who people these subterranean cities of the dead.

That the multitude of those heroic believers who yielded their life-blood to sign their belief in the doctrines of Jesus, were almost innumerable, is authenticated by a variety of testimonies. St. John the Evangelist, who lived through the persecutions raised by Nero and Domitianus, would seem to bear witness to the tides of blood that had already been poured out by the disciples of his divine master, as he symbolizes Pagan Rome under the figure of a 'woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.'† Many years after, when the Church had smarted under additional sufferings, St. Cyprian, (A.D. 248) after applauding the exuberance of courage, and constancy in faith, exhibited by the Christians, proclaims that the numbers of

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\* Boldetti, *p.* 580, Mai, *p.* 390.

† *Apoc. C.* xviii. *V.* 5.

them who had suffered martyrdom were incalculable.\* The multitudes of those who suffered martyrdom for the faith is also attested by the Roman cemeteries, in which it very often happens that whole galleries are found in which all the niches, crowded close to one another, were occupied with bodies, and the passage itself filled up with the earth that was extracted from a new branch excavated to afford additional room for the multitudes of martyred Christians brought in every night for sepulture. Nor are there wanting inscriptions to certify this fact. Sometimes the number of the saints entombed within, is indicated merely by numeral figures surrounded by palm-branches and wreaths, the emblems of victory and martyrdom, scratched in haste upon the upright tiles and mortar on the mouths of these passages: at other times, an inscription tells the fact.

N. XXX. SURRA, ET SENECA. COSS

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XL. L. FAB. CIL. M. ANN. LIB. COS.†

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XV.

IN.

P

A A‡

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XX

TRIGINTA

XX

XXXX§

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MARCELLA ET CHRISTI MARTYRES CCCCL.||

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\* Exuberante copia virtutis et fidei numerari non possunt martyres Christi.— *Lib. de Exhort. Martyr. c. xi.*

† This inscription was found traced on the mortar of the tomb in the cemetery of Priscilla on the Salarian way. Fabius Cilus and Annus Libo were consuls, A.D. 204.

‡ Boldetti, *p.* 436.

§ Ibid. *p.* 435.

|| Ibid. *p.* 233.

RUFFINUS ET CHRISTI MARTYRES  
CL MARTYRES CHRISTI\*

LOC. MA. C. CL. XVIII. INC.†

The poet Prudentius, born in 348, who visited the cemeteries or Roman Catacombs, has noted this circumstance in some verses that will furnish an appropriate illustration of the above inscriptions :—

Innumeros cineres sanctorum Romula in urbe  
Vidimus, O Christi Valeriane sacer.  
Incisos tumulis titulos, et singula quæris  
Nomina? difficile est ut replicare queam.  
Tantos justorum populos furor impius hausit.  
Quam coleret patrios Troja Roma deos.  
Plurima litterulis signata sepulchra loquuntur  
Martyris aut nomen, aut epigramma aliquod.  
Sunt et muta tamen tacitas claudentia tumbas  
Marmora, quæ solum significant numerum.  
Quanta virum jaceant congestis corpora acervis,  
Nosse licet, quorum nomina nulla legas?  
Sexaginta illic, defossas mole sub una,  
Reliquias memini me didicisse hominum:  
Quorum solus habet comperta vocabula Christus.‡

The surest sign by which a martyr's grave may be identified, is the attestation of martyrdom on the inscription. This, however, was not always practicable, in the hurry and the apprehension in which those were involved who were the objects of a violent persecution. Nor was it possible to ascertain the names of many of the individuals. To supply, therefore, the place of a regular inscription, a palm-branch or a laurel-crown was rudely scratched, or drawn in red letters, on the outside of the sepulchre; and inside was deposited, near the head of

\* Boldetti, *p.* 233.

† Bottari, *tom.* ii. *tav.* 127.

‡ *Hymn.* xi. *Peristeph. in principio.*



the deceased, a vase, containing what portion of his blood it had been possible to collect with sponges or handkerchiefs,\* together with the instrument of punishment, had it been procured, or a linen cloth tinged with blood.† When such unequivocal proofs of martyrdom are wanting, though the inscription on the tomb may announce the Christian belief of the dead within, and though the palm-branch, or the crown, or garland may

\* See what has been noticed on this point at p. 376.

† Many instruments which had been used by the public executioner to inflict death upon the martyrs, and which are now in the various museums of Rome, were discovered along with the bodies of the martyrs in their graves. Some of these instruments may be seen in the engraving at p. 376. Amongst them, not the least interesting, are certain large orbicular polished blocks of black marble, which served as weights, and were attached to the neck, the hands, and the feet, of the martyr, who had been condemned to suffer death by drowning, a sentence which, it is well known, was passed and executed upon very many Christians.

Summo pontis ab ardui  
 Sanctæ plebis episcopus  
 In præceps fluvio datur.  
 Suspensum laqueo gerens  
 Ingentis lapidem molæ.

*Prudent. Peris. vii. v. 21, &c.*

Of the number of such martyrs we find Simplicius and Faustinus, who were precipitated into the Tiber, as appears from the inscription on the marble sarcophagus in which their bodies, at their burial in the cemetery of Generosa, were deposited.

MARTYRES SIMPLICIUS ET FAUSTINUS  
 QUI PASSI SUNT IN FLUMEN TIBERE ET POSI-  
 -TI SUNT IN CIMITERIUM GENEROSÆ SUPER  
 FILIPPI.

This inscription is given in Aringhi, *tom. i. p. 365*, and Mai, *Vet. Scrip. nova Collectio, tom. v. p. 405*.

grace it, still the remains are not to be accounted as the relics of a saint, but only the mortal spoils of some early Christian.\*

? Not only did the Catacombs serve as cemeteries for the dead, but they were very often converted into a temporary residence by the living, who retired to such a melancholy refuge from the storm of persecution, whenever prudence suggested that a retreat from public notice would calm the fury of the tempest.

The saints of the new, emulated the edifying constancy in faith, and imitated the example exhibited by those of the old Law. Like them 'they were racked, not accepting deliverance, that they might find a better resurrection;—' 'they were stoned, they were cut asunder, they were tempted, they were put to death by the sword.' Like them, they sometimes retired, not through fear, but prudence, and 'wandered in deserts, in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth'.†

Amongst those who retired from the sword of the persecutor, may be enumerated several Roman pontiffs. St. Alexander,‡ with a crowd of his faithful flock, retreated to the Catacombs;§ St. Urbanus sought and experienced a temporary concealment amongst the holy martyrs' sepulchres.|| Of St. Stephen,¶ the first Roman pontiff of

\* Scacchius, *de Notis et Signis Sanctitatis*, Sect. ix. cap. 2.

† *Heb. C. xi. V. 35, 37, 38.*

‡ A.D. 122.

§ Nec præteramus in eorundem Martyrum actis notatum haberi Romanum Pontificem qui his temporis præerat ecclesiæ Dei, unâ cum multis in Catacumbis, persecutionis causâ, latuisse.—Vide Baronium, *Ann. Chrit.* 122. *Tom. ii. p. 106.*

|| Cum secundo esset confessor, latebat in sanctorum martyrum monumentis. *Ex. Act. S. Cæcil. apud Bosium.*

¶ A.D. 259.

that name, it is also recorded, that he went about the crypts of the martyrs, celebrating mass and holding meetings there.\* That this pope passed many of his days in the retirement of the Catacombs, is evident, from the records of his life. Hence it was that he used to despatch the companions of his misery, the learned priest Eusebius, and the deacon Marcellus, to exhort, or invite to a personal conference, those amongst the faithful who might particularly need his pastoral solicitude. Here it was that he used to assemble his clergy in religious conference, and collect the Neophytes, to instruct, and afterwards baptize them. It was while in these subterranean caverns, that the zealous pontiff had recourse to the ingenious expedient by which he converted, and baptized, not only the two interesting gentile children, brother and sister, who were in the habit of coming secretly to bring food to their Christian uncle, Hippolytus, in his concealment in the Catacombs, but their unbelieving parents also.†

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\* *Beatus vero Stephanus repletus gratiâ Spiritus Sancti per cryptas Martyrum, Missas et concilia celebrabat. Baron. Ann. 259, tom. iii. p. 72.*

† *Baronus, tom. iii. p. 69.* Hippolytus, a Christian of Rome, had flown to the Catacombs. His sister Paulina, and her husband Adrias, both pagans, were entrusted with the secret of his retreat, and humanely supplied him with the requisites of life, by means of their two only children—a boy of ten, and a girl of thirteen years of age—who were in the habit of stealing to their Christian uncle's hiding place with a basket of provisions. Hippolytus often sorrowed within himself over the melancholy reflection that these lovely children, and their generous and amiable parents, were living on enveloped in the darkness of idolatry; and sighed for some propitious opportunity for procuring their minds to be irradiated with the gospel-light of Jesus. St. Stephen was residing in the same quarter of the Catacombs. Hippolytus sought the venerable

To strike terror into the minds of the Christians, pope Xystus II was put to death, on the plea that by going to the Catacombs he had been guilty of violating the edict promulgated by the emperor Valerianus, who had, in an imperial rescript, prohibited the Christians from going to the cemeteries.\*

That not merely the reigning pope and his clergy, but multitudes of the faithful took up their abode in the cemeteries, is attested by the annals of ecclesiastical history; and the incident to which a reference was just now made,

pontiff, and consulted with him on the subject of his painful solicitude. The advice of the sacred pastor was, that he should detain his little niece and nephew at their next visit, in the hope that the parents, on perceiving that they did not return home as usual, would hasten to the uncle in the Catacombs to seek and enquire for their children, when such a favourable opportunity might be seized of discoursing with them. Hippolytus admired and adopted the suggestion. The children came as usual, and were easily persuaded to remain; both the parents, at the expiration of the ordinary interval, became alarmed, and hurried to the cemetery, where they found their beloved son and daughter with St. Stephen, who used all his persuasive eloquence, but in vain, to make them converts to the Christian faith. They retired unbelievers; but the seed was sown. They returned again, at the instance of the pontiff, and after a series of events and due instruction, they and their children were baptized; and all four, as well as St. Stephen and Hippolytus, were honoured with the crown of martyrdom, and buried in the Catacombs.

\* Cum autem priori Valeriani edicto vetiti Christiani essent ingredi cœmeteria; Xystum ceu legis transgressorem in eodem cœmeterio, ubi visus esset in legem pecasse, capite truncandum, Præfectus, ad absterrendos cæteros, a cœmeteriorum latebris, consulto præcepit.—*Baron. tom. iii. p. 93.*

may be cited as an illustration of the fact. Hippolytus was not the only laic who inhabited the Catacombs, for we learn that those relatives of his, Adrias and Paulina, with their two children, whose conversion from paganism he had been so instrumental in achieving, after distributing their riches to the poor, deserted their house, and came to fix their abode there along with Hippolytus.\*

The affectionate commiseration felt by friends and relatives, and those, too, who still continued to be the followers of paganism,† and the charitable compassion for the brethren of the faith, which animated the more wealthy, and sometimes secret, Christians, supplied the suffering inmates of these sepulchral recesses and voluntary prisons, with necessary food and raiment; and the piety of those who were particularly pre-eminent in exercising such a work of mercy, has been especially recorded.‡ Facilities for the performance of such a charitable office, were furnished by the nature and construction of the catacombs, which did not merely branch out in different directions beneath the gardens and the vineyards beyond the walls of Rome, but ran under several parts of the city itself. It required no great skill, and very little trouble, to pierce from a vault beneath a house in the interior of the capital, an entrance into these subterranean

\* Baronius, *tom. iii. p. 76.*

† As was exemplified in the case of Hippolytus.

‡ Palmatius is one amongst those who have been enumerated as a benefactor of the Christians who lay concealed in the catacombs. ‘Cœpit Palmatius omnem facultatem suam pauperibus Christianis erogare, et perquirere cryptas si inveniret absconditos Christianos quibus de facultatibus suis victum vel tegumentum ministrabat.’—*Ex. Cod. M.S. Basil. Fontis Olei Romæ.*

passages; and the shafts\* which descended into them, and the mouths of which are still discernible in many parts of the *campagna* more immediately round Rome, presented a mode of easy communication for the conveyance of food and every other requisite, to those who were living in them.† On some occasions, however, neither the darkness, nor the horror, nor the labyrinthian windings of the Catacombs, could furnish an asylum secure from the molestations of the infuriated persecutors of the Christian name. This is established by the monuments, and the historical facts which belong to that melancholy period. It is noticed in a very beautiful and feeling manner in the following inscription.

ALRXANDER MORTUS NON EST SED VIVIT SUPER  
ASTRA ET CORPUS IN HOC TUMULO QUIESCIT  
VITAM EXPLEVIT CUM ANTONINO IMP. QUI  
UBI MULTUM BENEFICII ANTEVENIRE PREVIDERET  
PRO GRATIA ODIUM REDDIT GENUA ENIM FLE  
CTENS VERO DEO SACRIFICATURUS AD SUPPLICIA  
DUCITUR. O TEMPORA INFAUSTA QUIBUS INTER  
SACRA ET VOTA NE IN CAVERNIS QUIDEM SAL  
VARI POSSIMUS. QUID MISERIUS VITA SED QUID  
MISERIUS IN MORTE CUM AB AMICIS ET PAREN  
TIBUS SEPELIRI NEQUEANT TANDEM IN COELO  
CORUSCAT. PARUM VIXIT QUI VIXIT IV. X...TEM.‡

And it was while celebrating mass, that pope St. Stephen was discovered in the cemeteries, and surrounded

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\* See p. 797.

† During the author's residence in Rome, an entrance into the Catacombs was discovered in a garden out of the *Porta Portese*. The descent into it, was by a narrow flight of steps.

‡ This valuable inscription, which belongs to the time of Antoninus Pius, who commenced his reign in 138, was discovered in the cemetery of Callistus, and may be seen in Aringhi. *Rom. Sott. Lib. i. C. 22.* Boldetti, p. 232, and Mai, *Veter. Scrip. Nov. Col. tom. v. p. 361.*

by a band of soldiers, who permitted him to conclude the holy sacrifice, when they thrust him into his pontifical chair and beheaded him.\*

The reader has been already made acquainted with some of the many proofs which might be deduced to certify the fact that the Catacombs were resorted to by the faithful for the purposes of religious worship.

As was before observed, it is particularly recorded of St. Stephen that he used to offer up the holy sacrifice of the Mass in different parts of the cemeteries.† It was there too, that the same venerable pontiff frequently administered the sacrament of baptism to crowds of Neophytes.‡ It was in coming out of one of these secret oratories, where he had received and was carrying away with him the blessed Eucharist, that the acolyte Tharsicius was apprehended, and put to death upon the spot by the soldiery, for refusing to discover to them the precious treasure that had been entrusted to his custody.§

The cemetery of Ostrianus on the Salarian way, was, from the most remote period, held in particular veneration on account of being that part of the Catacombs more frequently resorted to by St. Peter, for the purpose of administering baptism.|| Such, in reality, was the assiduousness of the faithful in attending to the offices of religion, which were celebrated in these subterranean chambers, that it very soon attracted the attention of the Heathens, who reviled them for being a people who avoided the

\* Baronius, *Annal. tom. iii. p. 76.*

† *p. 815.*

‡ Baronius, *Ibid. pp. 69, 72.*

§ See *p. 278.* Surely had Tharsicius believed the Eucharist to be nothing more than a piece of bread, he would have shown the blessed sacrament to the soldiers, and have saved his life.

|| Boldetti, *p. 40.*

light, and loved hiding places,\* and constituted the subject of a legal enactment against them in the reign of Valerianus,† who promulgated a decree prohibiting the Christians from visiting the Catacombs, with the denunciation of death to every one who should be detected violating the imperial mandate.‡ But if these and other written testimonies were wanting, the deficiency would be more than amply supplied in corroboration of this historical fact, by the many monuments which still exist in the Catacombs, where we may, at the present moment, behold the oratories with their frescoed walls and ceilings, the altars, and the baptisteries, erected by the first professors of our holy faith.§

Independent of the religious veneration with which they must be contemplated by every fervent Christian, the Catacombs will be regarded with lively interest by the ecclesiastical antiquary, who discovers in their inscriptions, their sculptures, and their fresco-paintings, such numerous and powerful auxiliaries to aid him in the prosecution of his studies. Of these venerable monuments, the fresco-paintings are not the least important, both as they constitute an epoch in the history of the fine arts amongst the ancients, and serve to illustrate the religious customs

\* This is one of the many accusations alleged by the Pagan Cæcilius, in Minucius Felix (A.D. 210) against the Christians of Rome, of whom he says;—'Latebrosa et lucifugax natio.'—*Minucius Felix*, p. 75.  
† A.D. 253.

‡ Proconsul dixit, jussu est (de Christianis scilicet) ut nulla conciliabula faciant, neque cœmeteria ingrediantur, quod qui facere comprehensus fuerit, capite plectatur. (*Vide Baron. Annal. tom. iii. p. 79.*)

§ These venerable monuments may be seen in the learned works of Bosio, Aringhi, Boldetti, Bottari, and D'Agincourt, passim.



and belief of the early Christians. It may, therefore, be worth while to ascertain, as near as possible, the era to which they properly belong.

Prudentius, who was born A.D. 348, during a visit which he paid to Rome, inspected the Catacombs, and has left us a description of the altars, and the oratories which he found in the subterranean city. From his hymn in honour of St. Hippolytus, it would seem that the poet's attention was arrested by the painting which adorned the cryptochapel in which the martyr's body was deposited.\* The testimony of Prudentius proves the existence of pictures in the cemeteries of Rome at the closing of the fourth century; we have evidence that ascends up to a much earlier period.

That many of these fresco-paintings were executed prior at least to the era of the last persecution, which was raised by Dioclesian, is certain; for the circumstance that the walls in several chapels, have been pierced with niches to receive the bodies of the martyrs, notwithstanding the injury thus inflicted on the fresco-paintings which already adorned them, proves the fact. Moreover, the fresco-paintings of the Roman Catacombs bear internal evidence to their own antiquity, which demonstrates them to have been, in many instances, the production of artists who lived in the second century of the Christian era. This opinion comes recommended to us by one of the most learned critical and competent judges who have ever investigated this department of the fine arts, accompanied by a weight of arguments, and of deductions which is irresistible. D'Agincourt, by his love for the study of antiquities, was attracted to Rome, where he purposed to pass only one winter: he was, however, enticed to spend

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\* The description is quoted at length at p. 379, in the note.

the remainder of his life—a space of thirty years—within the walls of that city. During such a lengthened period, he visited, he meditated on, he read of all its monuments, profane as well as sacred. He descended into the Catacombs, which he thoroughly explored and excavated in various directions; and procured plans of their oratories, and copies of their fresco-paintings to be taken by able artists. He made occasional visits to all the interesting cities of Italy; but Rome was the centre of his paradise, for here it was that he could leisurely look down the many vistas of antiquity, some of which passed through a space of more than two thousand years, and sketch accurate views, and institute correct comparisons between the most prominent objects in architecture, sculpture, and mosaic-work, that appeared at various ages in Pagan and in Christian Rome, in illustration of his ‘History of the Arts, from their decline up to the 16th century,’ a work which is the ornament of Europe, and engrossed the undivided attention of its author during the better portion of a long and studious life. It cannot, therefore, be denied that, if any one be competent to deliver an authoritative opinion on this question, it must be such a judge as D’Agincourt, who had so entirely and so leisurely investigated, and was so intimately conversant with this subject. Now D’Agincourt unhesitatingly pronounces many of these fresco-paintings to be the productions of the second century: some he conceived to have been executed in the first. He had the paintings of Pompeii which was overwhelmed by the eruption of Vesuvius, A.D. 79; the paintings in the Baths of Titus, A.D. 80; the paintings in the tomb of the Nasoni family, erected and ornamented in the second century; and various fresco-paintings of the time of Constantine. After diligently comparing the cemeterial chapels in the Catacombs, with the sepulchral

chamber at the tomb of the Nasoni, and discovering in both a perfect identity of manner in distributing the departments, and arranging the necessary ornaments, and a close correspondence in the style of drawing the human figure, united with a remarkable similarity in treating their respective subjects, as far as the mythological nature of the Pagan sepulchre, and the scriptural one of the Christian cemeteries could admit, he pronounced many of the latter to be coeval with the former, and in consequence the production of the second century. A few, he is of opinion, belong to the era of the first persecution,\* A.D. 56. The testimony of our own illustrious Flaxman, on any subject connected with the arts, is highly valuable. His opinion on the paintings of the Catacombs, corroborates the judgment of D'Agincourt.†

Not only the Christians of Rome, but also those of Jerusalem, were careful to ornament their burial-places, in crypts and Catacombs, with paintings of religious subjects. Dr. Clarke tells us, that near the holy city, there

\* D'Agincourt, *Histoire de l'Art*. tom. iv. pp. 62, 63, 69, 70; tom. vi. pp. 12, 13, 14, 15, &c. pl. v. vi.

† See Flaxman's observations upon them at p. 538, Vol. II, of this work. On some occasions, it is difficult to determine whether to smile at, or compassionate the dogmatic presumption of some authors whose flippancy is only commensurate with their profound ignorance of a greater part of the subject on which they are occupied, and whose horror is so great for any thing which tends, though in an indirect manner, to prove the antiquity of the belief and practices of their ancestors, which they have the politeness to nickname Popery. Some of those writers, with a magnanimous contempt of all authority, have insisted that the paintings in the Roman catacombs, are the works of the monks during the middle ages!!!

is a place still shown as Aceldama, or the field of blood, which was purchased by the chief priest for the burial-place of strangers; and now belongs to the Armenians. It is still, as it ever was, a place of sepulture; and its appearance maintains the truth of the tradition which points it out as the Aceldama of Scripture. In it there are many sepulchres excavated in the side of the mountain. In some of these sepulchres were ancient paintings, executed after the manner of those found upon the walls of Herculaneum and Pompeii, except that the figures were those of the apostles, the virgin, &c. with circular lines, as symbols of glory, round their heads. These paintings appeared upon the sides and upon the roof of each sepulchral chamber, preserving a wonderful freshness of colour, although much injured by Arabs and Turks, whose endeavours to deface them were visibly displayed in many instances. 'The sepulchres themselves, are, from these documents, evidently of Christian origin,' observes this traveller, who sneers at, and calumniates the Catholic religion whenever he lights upon an opportunity; and, after having asked the question of the antiquity of these interesting memorials, and attempted its solution, admits that if his conjectures be true, 'these paintings may be considered as exhibiting specimens of the art belonging to the second century.\*'

The Christian who feels a pious interest in beholding the spot in which his holy religion was cradled in her infancy in Europe, will find his devotion amply repaid by a visit to the Roman Catacombs. In these subterranean recesses, he will tread the very ground that was hallowed

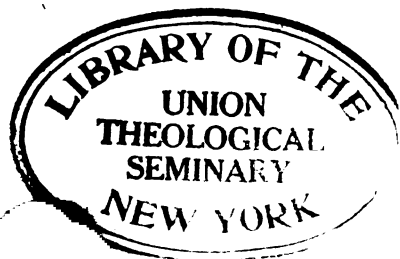
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\* Clarke's Travels, Vol. iv. pp. 343, 345, 347. 8vo. edition, London, 1817.

by the footsteps of the apostles and their immediate successors: he will stand within the chambers' walls that, eighteen centuries ago, echoed back the heart-stirring eloquence of a Peter and a Paul, of a Xystus and a Stephen, and the sighs and sobs and protestations uttered by hundreds of their faithful audience, that they would allow the Gentile to thrust his hand upon their hearts, and wring the very life-blood from them, rather than deny Christ Jesus. He will view the ground that was bedewed with the tears of a crowd of recently converted Gentiles, prostrate at the feet of the prince of the apostles, by whom they were about to be guided to the regenerating waters of baptism. He will behold the plain, the modest altar rise, around which multitudes of primitive believers used to kneel, while the person of the apostle, or some succeeding pontiff, alone stood up, preeminent and venerable, with tresses snow-white from care as well as age, and wreathing round a brow that shone all heavenly serenity and sweetness, who was bending over the sacred table upon which he was offering the holy Eucharistic sacrifice, as prayer, and hymns, and hallelujahs awoke, like the song of the three children in the fiery furnace, in strains of gladness that were pealed along these vaults and passages. In these cemeterial oratories, that were frequented by the primitive Christians, he will, in fine, not only observe the prototypes according to which those splendid edifices that arose in the fourth and succeeding ages, were partly modelled, but he will detect in them documents that proclaim the similarity of discipline, and identity of doctrine, which incorporate the Catholics of thenineteenth, with the apostles and their disciples and immediate successors, of the first century, in one spiritual body, by a unity of faith. The altar, by its very form and name, demonstrates that the sacrifice of the mass was a portion of

the creed delivered to the world by the apostles. The tomb of the martyr, which was used as the sacred table ; the care with which his mangled body—each drop of blood—the vial that contained it—the linen on which it had been sprinkled—the instrument of torture and of death,—were carefully collected and deposited apart, with the emblems of victory inscribed upon the sepulchre, prove the primitive respect which was exhibited to relics. The funeral-tile or marble slab, ceiling up the mouth of the sepulchre, and inscribed with a request to a departed servant of heaven for his prayers, speaks a contradiction to the asseverations of those who pretend that the invocation of saints is a novelty—a thing unknown to the first believers ; while the petition for peace and refreshment to the soul of him who sleeps within, so feelingly expressed by the piety of surviving friends and relations, and traced over the tomb, immediately attests the ancient existence of the belief in a middle state, where the soul of the faithful though not perfectly spotless Christian, might be suffering some temporary punishment, and could experience the efficacy of supplications put up from earth in its behalf. Moreover, he will conclude that if the earliest professors of the faith, all glowing as they were with primitive fervour, could derive assistance, from the aid of pictures, to fix their wandering thoughts, or enkindle their devotion when present in the house of God, by looking on the representations of holy subjects depicted on their walls, the same auxiliaries may be as innocently employed, and will produce the same desirable results in the nineteenth as in the first century.

THE END.



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## ERRATA.

Page 103, Line 17, for Vespers read Complin.

Line 19, for it is read they are.





